Hosidius Geta's Tragedy

"Medea"

A Vergilian Cento

Latin Text with Metrical Translation by

Joseph J. Mooney

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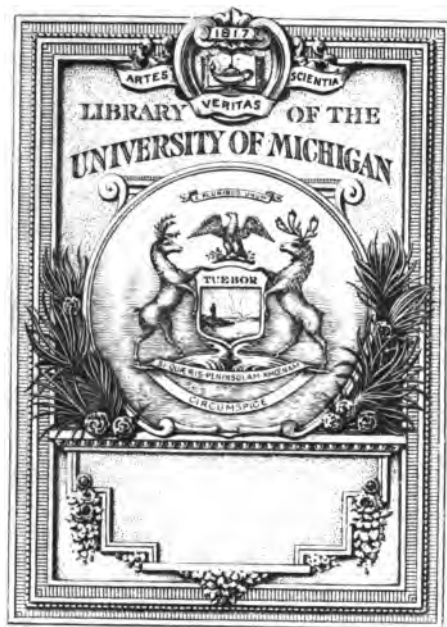
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INTRODUCTION

CENTOS, or patchwork poems made up of lines and half-lines from the works of some standard poet, usually Vergil, were very popular in the later centuries of the Roman Empire. According to Quintilian (vi, 3, 96) Ovid made a cento on Bad Poets from the tetrastichs of Aemilius Macer: both the Tetrastichs and Cento are lost. Hosidius Geta seems to be the earliest cento maker whose production is still extant. Nothing is known about him beyond what Tertullian says ("de praescrip. haeret.," 39) that he had then lately made up a tragedy called "Medea" entirely out of materials extracted from the works of Vergil. He must therefore have lived about the end of the second century A.D. Ausonius, who flourished about A.D. 350 made a "Cento Nuptialis" from Vergil running to 130 lines, which is a very clever specimen of the work.

Falconia Proba, who lived at the end of the fourth century A.D., made a cento from Vergil on subjects selected from the Old and New Testaments. This she dedicated to the Emperor Honorius subsequent to A.D. 393.

Several centos appear in the Latin Anthologies edited by

Meyer and by Riese under the name of Mavortius, who is supposed to have been the Mavortius who was consul A.D. 527.

Luxorius, who also flourished in the early part of the sixth century, made a "Cento Nuptialis" from Vergil, which is also published in the Anthologies above mentioned. It is very inferior to that of Ausonius.

The makers of these centos somewhat resemble those more modern countrymen of theirs who quarry anew the stones and materials wherewith to build their cottages from the magnificent old edifices of their forefathers. Like a piece of patchwork these centos have the drawback that the seams are often too visible.

The story of Medea was a very favourite subject for a tragedy among the old Romans. Ennius wrote one on the subject as Cicero testifies ("de Fin.," i, 2). Nonius and Priscian give quotations from one on the same subject by Accius. Ovid wrote a tragedy "Medea" ("Amores," ii, 18, 3; Quint., vii, 98) and so did Seneca and Lucan ("Vit. Luc."). Another by Curiatus Maternus is mentioned in the "Dialogue on Oratory" by Tacitus. All the above are lost except the one by Seneca. This extends to nearly 1,100 lines, one quarter of which is occupied by declamatory monologue and another quarter taken up by the Chorus, leaving about a half for dialogue and the necessary action of the drama. Of course neither Seneca's nor Geta's "Medea" was ever meant to be presented on the stage. They belong to the class which we call chamber-dramas, like Milton's "Samson Agonistes," Arnold's "Merope" or Taylor's "Philip van Artevelde." No doubt Hosidius Geta modelled his tragedy on one or more of those on the same subject by his predecessors, which were then in existence. His characters are the same as those of Seneca's "Medea." The scene between Creon and Medea

occurs in the drama of Euripides, and from that was transferred into the drama of Ennius as well as that of Seneca. It is necessary to explain how by her unjust treatment Medea got worked up to a paroxysm of rage. In Seneca's "Medea" she asks Jason to let her take the children with her if she must go and he refuses, so she thinks it will vex him if she kills them. But if this were the only thing she wanted to do it would have vexed him just as much for her to have taken them with her despite his refusal to allow her to do so (*cf.* H. G. "Med.," 397), and there would have been no crime in the action. The real reason seems to be that it was necessary for her to kill them to secure the co-operation of the hellish powers in her scheme of vengeance and escape (*cf.* v, 408). A similar episode occurs in the Fifth Epode of Horace, where the sorceresses kill a boy in order to secure something wherewith to purchase the co-operation of the fiends in bringing back to her the paramour of one of them who had forsaken her. Compare also the self-devotion of the Decii to secure the aid of the powers below in destroying the enemy (Aur. Vict., "Vir. Ill.," 27). The ghost of Absyrtus in Seneca's drama demands their lives as an expiatory offering though he does not appear and speak, but Medea relates his demand. In Geta's drama the ghost rather seems to warn her of the consequences of her evil deeds, but in vain. In spite of Horace's prohibition ("Ars Poet.," 185), "let not Medea slay her children before the people," our author commits the same impropriety as Seneca in making Medea murder her children upon the stage. Though perhaps to people used to the sights of the amphitheatre there would be no particular impropriety in it. In Seneca's "Medea" she kills them at an upper window or on the roof of a house before Jason's eyes, and then flies away.

Though there are many resemblances to Seneca's drama Geta probably followed that of Ovid for the most part. Although this has been lost the story of Medea is fully told by him elsewhere ("Metamorphoses," vii, 1-424; "Tristia," iii, 9, 6, *seq.*; "Heroides," xii). The story as given in these places bears a strong resemblance to this tragedy, and Ovid would probably give the same story in his drama as he tells elsewhere.

JASON AND MEDEA

THE following outline of their story only touches upon the things mentioned in the drama. Jolcos was a city near the coast in Thessaly. Its king was named Pelias. This king ordered Jason to go to Colchis, a country at the eastern extremity of the Black Sea, and fetch back from there the Golden Fleece. Thereupon Jason got a ship built, which he called the "Argo," and set out on his voyage with fifty heroes as companions. After many adventures they arrived at Colchis. The king of this country was named Aëtes, and from him they demanded the Fleece. He promised to give it to them if Jason could yoke two fire-breathing bulls with brazen hoofs to a plough, and plough with them the field of Mars. Here he was then to sow some dragon's teeth, and conquer the armed men which would begin to spring up from them. The prospect seemed hopeless. However, Medea the daughter of Aëtes fell in love with Jason. This princess was a celebrated enchantress, and Jason having promised to marry her, she gave him drugs and herbs which would enable him to do the tasks prescribed. By her aid he successfully accomplished them. Aëtes, however, refused to give up the Fleece, and planned to destroy Jason and his companions. Having learned this, Medea gave a potion to the dragon which guarded the tree on which the Golden Fleece was hung, in order that Jason might take it down while he slept. This having been done, Medea fled with Jason to his ship, taking

her young brother Absyrtus with her, and they immediately set sail.

Next morning her father discovered what they had done, and started in pursuit of them. As he seemed likely to catch them, Medea killed and dismembered her young brother to delay her father by the collection of the remains and so to facilitate their escape. Her plan was successful and they got away. After sailing to the upper end of the Adriatic by way of the Danube, and thence by way of the Po to the Gulf of Genoa, they coasted down Italy and passed Scylla and Charybdis. Thereafter, when they were in the Libyan Sea, a violent storm arose which Medea suppressed. Next they were cast away on the Syrtes, monstrous sandbanks on the north coast of Africa, from which they escaped by the aid of Triton, and after more adventures they arrived at Jolcos. Here, angered by the treatment Jason and his family had received from Pelias, Medea resolved to destroy that monarch, who was now an old man. She killed an old ram, and having boiled the body in a brazen cauldron with magic herbs it came forth young again. She persuaded the daughters of Pelias to kill their father and do the same with him. She did not help them, however, and he was no more.

Being driven from Jolcos on account of this they came to Corinth. Creon, who was king of this city, received them kindly and allowed them to dwell there. For ten years they lived there happily and had two sons. Then Jason wanted to marry Creüsa, the daughter of Creon, so he cast Medea aside, and Creon ordered her to quit Corinth forthwith. Moreover she was forbidden to take her sons with her. Distracted with grief, Medea entreated Jason to give Creüsa up, and as he refused to do this, she planned to get revenge before she went away. She sent Creüsa a crown containing

naphtha. The princess wore this while sacrificing, and it caught fire from the flames on the altar. Water would not put out the flame and she was burned to death; her father sharing her fate in attempting to save his daughter. Medea then killed her sons and flew away through the air to Athens in a chariot drawn by winged dragons.

HOSIDII GETAE "MEDEA"

TRAGOEDIA

MEDEA

ESTO nunc Sol testis et haec mihi Terra precanti
Et Dirae ultrices et tu, Saturnia Juno!
Ad te confugio, nam te dare jura loquuntur
Connubiis. si quid pietas antiqua labores
5 Respicit humanos, nostro succurre labori,
Alma Venus! quicumque oculis haec aspicis aequis,
Accipite haec meritumque malis advertite numen!
Quid primum deserta querar? connubia nostra
Reppulit et sparsos fraterna caede Penates.
10 Quid Syrtes aut Scylla mihi, quid vasta Charybdis
Profuerit mediosque fugam tenuisse per hostes?
Improbe amor, quid non mortalia pectora cogis?
Jussa aliena pati iterumque revolvere casus,
Ire iterum in lacrimas. sed nullis ille movetur
15 Fletibus, infixum stridit sub pectore vulnus.
Extinctus pudor atque immitis rupta tyranni
Foedera et oblitus famae melioris amantis
Oblitusve sui est: lacrimae volvuntur inanes.
Nusquam tuta fides, vana spe lusit amantem
20 Crudelis. quid, si non arva aliena domosque
Ignotas peteret, pro virginitate reponit?
Heu pietas, heu prisca fides! captiva videbo

Reginam thalamo cunctantem ostroque superbo—
Haut impune quidem, si quid mea carmina possunt!

CHORUS COLCHIDARUM

25 Rerum cui summa potestas,
Precibus si flecteris ullis
Et si pietate meremur,
Nostro succurre labori.
Et tu Saturnia Juno,
30 Cui vincla jugalia curae,
Oculis haec aspicis aequis?
Nemorum Latonia custos
Triviis ululata per urbes,
Sic nos in sceptra reponis?
35 Quid, o pulcherrime conjunx,
Potuisti linquere solam,
Per tot discrimina rerum
Nequiquam erepte periclis?
Manet alta mente repostum,
40 Quam forti pectore et armis
[Pelago decurrit aperto,[1]
Medioque ex hoste recepit][2]
Quaesitas sanguine dotes.
Felix, heu nimium felix,
45 Dum fata deusque sinebant!
Nescis heu perdita necdum,
Quae te dementia cepit
Caput objectare periclis.
Haec nos suprema manebant?
50 Hoc ignes araeque parabant?

[1] Added by me from "Aen.," v, 212.
[2] Added by Burmann from "Aen.," vi, 111.

Nostram nunc accipe mentem:
Vaginaque eripe ferrum
Ferroque averte dolorem!

CREON. MEDEA

Creon. Femina, quae nostris erras in finibus hostis,
55 Flecte viam velis; neque enim nescimus et urbem
Et genus invisum et non innoxia verba;
Hostilis facies [ne] occurrat et omina turbet.[1]
Medea. Nullae hic insidiae nec tanta superbia victis,
Non ea vis animo, nec sic ad praelia veni.
60 *Creon.* Non ut rere meas effugit nuntius aures,
Unde genus ducis varium et mutabile semper.
Tu potes unanimes armare in praelia fratres
Funereasque inferre faces et cingere flamma,
Pacem orare manu et vertere sidera retro
65 Atque odiis versare domos. tibi nomina mille,
Mille nocendi artes [mutas],[2] fecundaque poenis
Viscera [sunt],[3] notumque furens quid femina possit.
Cede locis pelagoque volans da vela patenti.
Medea. Rex, genus egregium, liceat te voce moneri.
70 Pauca tibi e multis, quoniam est oblata facultas,
Dicam equidem, licet arma mihi mortemque mineris.
Ne pete connubiis natam—meminisse juvabit;
Dissice compositam pacem; miserere tuorum.
Creon. Ne tantos mihi finge metus neve omine tanto
75 Prosequere: causas nequiquam nectis inanes.
Stat sua cuique dies. non ipsi exscindere ferro

[1] "Aen.," iii, 407, *ne* inserted by Burmann from preceding line.
[2] *Mutas* added by me from "Aen.," xii, 397. Instead, Burmann adds *semper*, Oudendorp *testor*.
[3] *Sunt* added by Burmann.

Caelicolae valeant, fati quod lege tenetur.
Nec mea jam mutata loco sententia cedit.
Medea. Non equidem invideo genero dignisque hymenaeis,
80 Non jam conjugium antiquum, quod prodidit, oro:
Tempus inane peto; liceat subducere classem;
Extremam hanc oro veniam. succurre relictae,
Dum pelago desaevit hiems, miserere parentis,
O genitor, et nos aliquod nomenque decusque
85 Gessimus [et] scis ipse neque est te fallere quidquam.
Nunc victi tristes (quoniam fors omnia versat)
Submissi petimus terram, litusque rogamus
Innocuum, neque te ullius violentia vincat.
Creon. Quid causas petis in me exitiumque meorum?
90 Quidquid id est, timeo vatum praedicta priorum.
Eja age, rumpe moras; quo me decet usque teneri?
Medea. Quem sequimur? quove ire jubes? ubi ponere sedes?
Creon. Ire ad conspectum cari genitoris et ora,
Dum curae ambiguae, dum spes incerta futuri.
95 *Medea.* Nunc scio quid sit amor. hospitio prohibemur arenae,
Nec spes ulla fugae, nulla hinc exire potestas,
Quassataeque rates, geminique sub ubere nati,
Et glacialis hiems aquilonibus asperat undas.
Si te nulla movet tantae pietatis imago,
100 Indulge hospitio noctem non amplius unam.
Hanc sine me spem ferre tui; audentior ibo.
Creon. Desine jam tandem: tota quod mente petisti,
Largior et repetens iterumque iterumque monebo:
Si te his attigerit terris Aurora morantem,
105 Unum pro multis dabitur caput.

VOX DEINTUS. CHORUS

Vox. O digno conjuncta viro, dotabere virgo.
Ferte facis propere, thalamo deducere adorti.
Ore favete omnes et cingite tempora ramis.
Chorus. Velamus fronde per urbem
110 Votisque incendimus aras.
Heu corda oblita tuorum
Vatum praedicta priorum,
Fati sortisque futurae!
Spe multum captus inani
115 Mactat de more bidentes
Phoeboque patrique Lyaeo,
Cui vincla jugalia curae,
Cumulatque altaria donis.
Tremere omnia visa repente,
120 Fibrae apparere minaces,
Vox reddita fertur ad aures:
"Thalamis neu crede paratis,
Funus crudele videbis."
Carpebant membra quietem,
125 Animalia somnus habebat,
Ferali carmine bubo
In fletum ducere voces:
Tristes denuntiat iras.
Quae tanta insania, cives,
130 Velati tempora ramis?
Thalamo deducere adorti
Quaeso miserescite regis,
[moniti et non temnere divos].[1]
Recubans sub tegmine fagi
135 Divino carmine pastor

[1] Added by me from "Aen.," vi, 620.

Vocat in certamina divos:
Ramo frondente pependit.
Quae te dementia cepit,
Saxi de vertice pastor,
140 Divina Palladis arte
Phoebum superare canendo?
Raptim secat aethera pinnis
Fugiens Minoia regna
Ausus se credere caelo
145 Vitamque relinquit in auras.
Demens videt agmina Pentheus,
Incensas pectore matres;
Vocat agmina saeva sororum:
Caput a cervice revulsum,
150 Juvenem sparsere per agros.

MEDEA. NUTRIX

Medea. En quid ago? Vulgi quae vox pervenit ad aures?
Obstipui magnoque irarum fluctuat aestu
Durus amor; taedet caeli convexa tueri.
Quae potui infelix! quae memet in omnia verti,
155 Cui pecudum fibrae, caeli cui sidera parent?
Heu furiis incensa feror! stat gratia facti.
Illum ego per flammas et mille sequentia tela,
Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum
Eripui leto. fateor, arma impia sumpsi.
160 Sed quid ego haec autem nequiquam ingrata revolvo?
Quid loquor aut ubi sum? ictum jam foedus et omnes
Compositae leges. credo mea vulnera restant.
Nutrix. Non hoc ista sibi tempus spectacula poscit,
Sed cape dicta memor, duri solacia casus.

165 Sensibus hic imis nostram nunc accipe mentem :
Heu fuge crudeles terras, fuge litus avarum.
Medea. Cara mihi nutrix, claudit nos objice pontus,
Deest jam terra fugae; rerum pars altera adempta est.
Hac gener atque socer patriaque excedere suadet.
170 *Nutrix.* Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito;
Et quo quemque modo fugiasque ferasque laborem,
Tu modo posce deos veniam, tu munera supplex
Tende petens pacem causasque innecte morandi
Carminibus: forsan miseros meliora sequentur.
175 *Medea.* Nunc oblita mihi tot carmina. vox faucibus haesit;[1]
Mens immota manet et caeco carpitur igni.
Carmina vel caelo possunt deducere lunam,
Sistere aquam fluviis, deducere montibus ornos.
Has herbas atque haec Ponto[2] mihi lecta venena
180 Ipse dedit; nihil ille deos, nil carmina curat.
Nutrix. Quid struis? aut qua spe inimica in gente moraris?[3]
[*Medea.*][4] Aut pugnam aut aliquid jam dudum invadere magnum
[Mens agitat: mistus dolor et pudor armat in hostes][5]
Seu versare dolos, seu certae occumbere morti.

JASON. SATELLES

185 *Jason.* Quod votis optastis, adest: timor omnis abesto.
Hic domus, haec patria est, nullum maris aequor arandum.
Solvite corde metum tandem tellure potiti

[1] There is a long syllable too many in this line.
[2] Cf. *Medea ex eodem Ponto profugisse.* Cicero, "Imp. Pomp.," ix, 22.
[3] *Struit* and *moratur*, "Aen.," iv, 235.
[4] *Medea* added here by Riese.
[5] Line supplied from "Aen.," ix, 187 and x, 398.

Per varios casus. bene gestis corpora rebus
Procurate, viri; juvat indulgere choreis.
190 *Satelles.* Unde tremor terris? qua vi maria alta tumescunt?
Quid tantum Oceano properent se tingere soles?
Nescio quod certum est: in nubem cogitur aer.
Aspice convexo nutantem pondere mundum,
Et fratris radiis obnoxia surgere luna.
195 *Jason.* Media fert tristes sucos infecta venenis,
Quo thalamum eripiat atque ossibus implicet ignem.
Fare age quid venias jam istinc et comprime gressum.
Medea. Ad te confugio, precibusque inflectere nostris.
O dulcis conjunx, non haec sine numine divum
200 Eveniunt, [et nos fas extera quaerere regna.][1]
Tanta meae si te ceperunt taedia laudis,
Hos cape fatorum comites, his moenia quaere.
Jason. Non fugis hinc praeceps, dum praecipitare potestas
Jam propiore deo?[2] nescis, heu perdita, nescis,
205 Nec quae te circumstent deinde pericula, cernis.
Medea. Hanc quoque deserimus sedem. tibi ducitur uxor—
Cui pater et conjunx quondam tua dicta relinquor?
Et sedet hoc animo, dotalis regia cordi est
Externique iterum thalami.
210 Mene fugis? hoc sum terraque marique secuta?
Hic labor extremus? longarum haec meta viarum?
Hi nostri reditus expectatique triumphi?
Quid tua sancta fides? iterum crudelia retro
Fata vocant. tantis nequiquam erepte periclis,
215 Mene fugis? per ego has lacrimas, per si quis amatae

[1] Added by me from "Aen.," iv, 350.
[2] This could be read *propiora die* on the analogy of "Aen.," vi, 51; *propiora* from "Aen.," v, 168, *die* from "Georg.," iv, 466 and other places.

Tangit honos animum, et mensas quae advena adisti,
Per connubia nostra, per inceptos hymenaeos
Te precor: O miserere animi non digna ferentis.
Namque aliud quid sit, quod jam implorare queamus?
220 Ipse mihi nuper Libycis tu testis in undis:
Tum rauca assiduo longe sale saxa sonabant,
Ionioque[1] mari tantis surgentibus undis,
Luctantes ventos tempestatesque sonoras
Compressi, et rabiem tantam caelique marisque.
225 Unius in miseri exitium proque omnibus unum
Objeci caput, id sperans fore munus amanti.
Sed quid ego ambages et longa exorsa revolvo?
Nil super imperio moveor; speravimus ista
Tempore quo primum fortes ad aratra juvencos
230 Objeci, et tauros spirantes naribus ignem,
Seminibusque satis immanis dentibus hydri
Exoritur[2] legio, et campo stetit agmen aperto,
Telorum seges et jaculis increvit acutis.
Ferrea progenies duris caput extulit arvis.
235 Illi inter sese magna vi vulnera miscent,
Confixique suis telis et pectora duro
Transfossi ligno animasque in vulnera ponunt.
Auro ingens coluber servabat in arbore ramos
Nec visu facilis nec dictu affabilis ulli.
240 Ille manum patiens immania terga resolvit.
Ut me conspexit flammantia lumina torquens,
Cervicem inflexam posuit somnosque petivit.
Si te nulla movet tantarum gloria rerum,

[1] Riese's reading from "Aen.," v, 193.

[2] The manuscript gives *eripuit*. "Georg.," ii, 280, whence the line comes, has *explicuit*; but neither is appropriate. *Exoritur* is found "Aen.," v, 765 *et al.*

Sin absumpta salus nec habet fortuna regressum,
245 Si nulla est regio miseris quam det tua conjunx,
I decus i nostrum, faciat te prole parentem
Egregia interea conjunx melioribus, opto,
Auspiciis! possem hinc asportare Creusam:
Spero equidem mediis, si quid pia numina possunt,
250 Supplicia hausurum scopulis; dabis, improbe, poenas
Quod minime reris, rebus jam rite paratis.
Jason. Desine meque tuis incendere teque querellis.
Nam mihi parta quies, nullum maris aequor arandum,
Nec veni, nisi fata locum sedemque dedissent.
255 [*Medea.*][1] Heu tot incassum fusos patiere labores,
Nec venit in mentem fumans sub vomere taurus,
Jam gravior Pelias et aena undantia flammis
Squamosusque draco et quaesitae sanguine dotes?
In regnis hoc ausa tuis—
260 [*Jason.*][2] Haec loca non tauri spirantes naribus ignem,
[Invertere satis immanis dentibus hydri;][3]
Nec galea densisque virum seges horruit hastis,
Nec vim tela ferunt: mitte hanc de pectore curam.
[*Medea.*] Nam quis te, juvenum confidentissime, nostras
265 Jussit adire domos? pelagine erroribus actus
An fratris miseri letum ut crudele videres?
Jason. Sive errore viae seu tempestatibus acti
[Quo deus et quo dura vocat Fortuna secuti.][4]
Quis deus in fraudem, quae [te][5] dementia cepit
270 Commaculare manus, fraterna caede Penates?

[1] *Medea* added by Riese.
[2] *Jason* added by Riese, the next *Medea* following added by Burmann.
[3] This line was added by Meyer from "Georg.," ii, 141.
[4] Added by me from "Aen.," xii, 677 and "Georg.," iv, 219.
[5] Added by Burmann.

Aut ego tela dedi aut vitam committere ventis
Hortati sumus? [aut][1] quae dura potentia nostra?
Medea. Nil nostri miserere, nihil mea carmina curas;
Efficiam, posthac ne quemquam voce lacessas.
275 Nec dulces natos Veneris nec praemia noris.
Jason. Quid causas petis [quid][2] et irrita jurgia jactas?
Jamque vale, melior quoniam pars acta diei est.[3]
Medea. Utere sorte tua, susceptum perfice munus.
Jason. Nunc iter ad regem nobis. quod te alloquor, hoc est.
280 *Medea.* Num fletu ingemuit nostro aut miseratus amantem est?
Et dubitamus adhuc? lacrimantem et multa volentem
Dicere deseruit rapidusque in tecta recessit.
Quid labor aut benefacta juvant? mea tristia fata
Fessa jacent. ubi nunc nobis deus ille magister
285 Et Furiis agitatus amor et conscia virtus?
Nam quid dissimulo aut quae me ad majora reservo?
Stat casus renovare omnes, dare lintea retro,
Rursus et casus abies visura marinos.
Te sine, frater, erit. quod si mea numina non sunt,
290 Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo!

CHORUS

Dictis exarsit in iras
Insani Martis amore,
Poenorum qualis in arvis
Venantum saepta corona
295 Fulva cervice leaena,
Qualis mala gramina pastus

[1] Added by Burmann from "Aen.," x, 69.
[2] This line is short here by a long syllable; should this second *quid* be added?
[3] This *est* does not appear in "Aen.," ix, 156.

Tractu se colligit anguis,
Tumidum quem bruma tegebat;
Caput altum in proelia tollit,
300 Linguis micat ore trisulcis:
[Qualis teloque secutus,] [1]
Furiis agitatus, Orestes
Armatam facibus matrem;
Ardens agit aequore toto
305 Patriasque obtruncat ad aras:
Qualis trieterica Baccho
Triviis ululata per urbem
Inter deserta ferarum,
Palla subcincta cruenta
310 Vocat agmina saeva sororum:
Qualis Philomela sub umbra
Pectus signata cruentum
Late loca questibus implet,
Maerens miserabile carmen
315 Cantu solata laborem:
[Qualis miserabilis Orpheus] [2]
Graviter pro conjuge saevit
Deserti ad Strymonis undam;
Te solo in litore secum
320 Anima fugiente vocabat,
Scirent si ignoscere Manes.

CREON. NUNTIUS

Nuntius. Quo feror? unde abii? [rumpit] [3] pavor ossaque et artus

[1] Added by me from "Aen.," iv, 143 and ix, 959.
[2] Added by Schrader from "Georg.," iv, 454.
[3] *Rumpit* was added by Burmann from "Aen.," vii, 458.

Perfudit toto proruptus corpore sudor.
Genua labant, [gelidus][1] oculos stupor urget inertes,
325 Arrectaeque horrore comae et vox faucibus haesit.
Creon. Quo res summa loco? unde haec tam clara repente
Tempestas sine more furit? maria omnia caelo
Miscuit, ingeminant abruptis nubibus ignes.
Fare age mihique haec edissere vera roganti.
330 *Nuntius.* Aedibus in mediis quaeque ipse miserrima vidi
Horresco referens. palla subcincta cruenta
In medioque focos nocturnas inchoat aras,
Intenditque locum sertis et fronde coronat
Funerea, crinem vittis innexa cruentis,
335 Unum exuta pedem vinclis, in veste recincta,
Spargens humida mella soporiferumque papaver.
Sparserat et latices simulatos fontis Averni,
Sanguineam volvens aciem, manibusque cruentis
Pro molli viola cassiaque crocoque rubenti
340 Urit odoratum nocturno in lumine cedrum
Scillamque elleborosque graves et sulfura viva,
Obscuris vera involvens lacrimisque coactis
Voce vocans Hecaten; et non memorabile numen[2]
Ferro accincta vocat.
345 Haec effata silet, oculis micat acribus ignem,
Expectans, quae signa ferant, ignara futuri.
Eripiunt subito nubes caelumque diemque,
Et tremefacta solo tellus; micat ignibus aether.
Continuo auditae voces vagitus et ingens:
350 Visus adesse pedum sonitus et saeva sonare
Verbera; [tum][3] visaeque canes ululare per umbras

[1] *Gelidus* added by Riese from "Aen.," xii, 905.
[2] Or *nomen* may be read, *i.e.*, the name of Demiourgos or Demogorgon.
[3] *Tum* added by Oudendorp from "Aen.," vi, 558.

Adventante dea, refluitque exterritus amnis
Et pavidae matres pressere ad pectora natos.
Exhinc Gorgoneis Allecto infecta venenis
355 Exsurgitque facem attollens atque intonat ore:
Respice ad haec; adsum dirarum ab sede sororum,
Bella manu letumque gero.
Talia cernenti[1] tandem sic orsa vicissim:
Venisti tandem mecum partire laborem,
360 Tu dea, tu praesens animis illabere nostris.
Dissice compositam pacem, sere crimina belli
(Namque potes), colui vestros si semper honores.
Talibus Allecto dictis exarsit in iram
Horrendum stridens rabidoque haec addidit ore:
365 "O germana mihi, mitte hanc de pectore curam.
Et nunc si bellare paras et luctu miscere hymenaeos[2]
Funereasque inferre faces et cingere flamma,
Quidquid in arte mea possum, meminisse necesse est,
Quantum ignes animaeque valent—absiste precando."
370 Dixerat; attollit stridentes anguibus alas,
Ardentes dare visa faces, supera ardua linquens.
Illa dolos operi flammisque sequacibus iras
Jungebat, duplicem gemmis auroque coronam
Consertam squamis serpentum; flamma volantem
375 Implicat, involvitque domum caligine caeca
Prospectum eripiens oculis. mihi frigidus horror
Membra quatit gelidusque coit formidine sanguis:
Improvisum aspris veluti qui sentibus anguem
Aut videt aut vidisse putat, metuensque pericli
380 Incipit effari, nec vox aut verba sequuntur.
Idque audire sat est, quo me decet usque teneri?
Vadite et haec regi memores mandata referte.

[1] Burmann reads *jactanti*.
[2] This line is overloaded.

MEDEA. NUTRIX

Nutrix. Hoc habet. haec melior magnis data victima divis.
Talia conjugia et tales celebrent hymenaeos.
385 *Medea.* Tu secreta pyram natorum maxima nutrix
Erige, tuque ipsa pia tege tempora vitta,
Verbenasque adole pingues nigrumque bitumen.
Sacra Jovi Stygio, quae rite incepta paravi,
Perficere est animus finemque imponere curis.
390 *Nutrix.* Discessere omnes medii spatiumque dedere.
Medea. Heu stirpem invisam et fatis contraria nostris!
Huc ades, o formose puer. qui spiritus illi!
Sic oculos, sic ille manus, sic ora ferebat!
Perfidus et cuperem ipse parens spectator adesset.
395 *Fil.* Parce pias scelerare manus! aut quo tibi nostri
Pulsus amor? si juris materni cura remordet,
Natis parce tuis et nos rape in omnia tecum;
Quo res cumque cadunt, unum et commune periclum.
[*Umbra.*][1] Aspice nos. adsum dirarum ab sede sororum,
400 Infelix simulacrum [ac] laniatum corpore toto.
[Omnibus umbra locis adero: dabis, improba, poenas.][2]
Medea. Quid dubitas? audendum dextra, nunc ipsa vocat res.[3]
Auctor ego audendi. fecundum concute pectus.
Si concessa peto, si poenas ore reposco,
405 Nullum in caede nefas; et amor non talia curat.
Fil. Hostis amare, quid increpitas mea tristia fata?
Medea. Suggere tela mihi finemque impone labori.
Sanguine quaerendi reditus.

[1] Added by Riese.
[2] Added by me from "Aen.," iv, 386. Compare v, 474, *Germanum fugiens. Improbe* (*loc. cit.*), *improba* from ii, 80. [3] Overloaded line.

Fil. Nec te noster amor pietas nec mitigat ulla,
410 Nec venit in mentem [parvos educere natos?[1]
Numina nulla premunt][2] natorum sanguine matrem
Conmaculare manus. nostri tibi cura recessit
Et matri praereptus amor?
Medea. Crimen amor vestrum spretaeque injuria formae
415 His mersere malis. fratrem ne desere frater.
Poenarum exhaustum satis est, via facta per hostes,
Et genus invisum dextra sub Tartara misi.
Jamjam nulla mora est currus agitare volantes.

JASON. NUNTIUS. MEDEA EX ALTO

Jason. Ei mihi, quid tanto turbantur moenia luctu?
420 Quaecumque est fortuna, mea est; quid denique restat?
Dic age, namque mihi fallax haut ante repertus.
Nuntius. En perfecta tibi promissa conjugis arte
Munera! ingentem luctum ne quaere tuorum.
Sed si tantus amor menti, si tanta cupido est,
425 Expediam dictis et te tua fata docebo.
Conspectu in medio cum dona imponeret aris
(A virgo infelix!) oculos dejecta decoros,
Undique conveniunt per limina laeta frequentes
Matres atque viri cumulantque altaria donis.
430 Religione patrum biforem dat tibia cantum,
Cum subito dictuque oritur mirabile monstrum.
Ecce levis summo descendit corpore pestis,[3]
Incipit ac totis Vulcanum spargere tectis,
Regalesque accensa comas, accensa coronam
435 Membra sequebantur, artus sacer ignis edebat.

[1] Added by me from "Aen.," viii.
[2] Added by me from "Aen.," x, 375.
[3] Cf. *Vulcania pestis=ignis* (Sil. Ital., xvii, 505).

Diffugiunt comites et quae sibi quisque timebat.
Tecta metu petiere, et sic ubi concava furtim
Saxa petunt, furit immissis Vulcanus habenis.
Nec vires heroum infusaque flumina prosunt,
440 Quaesitaeque nocent artes, miserabile dictu!
Illa autem per populos aditumque per avia quaerit,[1]
Arte nova speculata locum; [in nubila fugit[2]
Et juncti currum dominae subiere dracones.[3]
Squamam incendebat fulgor] paribusque revinxit[4]
445 Serpentum spiris ventosasque addidit alas,
Ense levis nudo, perfusos sanguine currus.
Jason. Quo sequar? aut quid jam misero mihi denique restat?
Me, me, adsum qui feci, in me omnia tela
Conjicite, hanc animam quocumque absumite leto!
450 Funeris heu tibi causa fui; dux femina facti.
Medea. Huc geminas nunc flecte acies et conde sepulcro
Corpora natorum, cape dona extrema tuorum.
Et tumulum facite et tumulo super addite carmen:
Saevus amor docuit natorum sanguine matrem
455 Commaculare manus, luctu miscere hymenaeos
Et super aetherias errare licentius auras.
Jason. Crudelis mater, tanton me crimine dignum
Duxisti et patrios foedasti funere vultus?
Arma, viri, ferte arma! date tela, ascendite muros!
460 *Medea.* Quo moriture ruis? thalamos ne desere pactos!
Hortator scelerum, nostram nunc accipe mentem.

[1] "Aen.," vii, 561; "Georg.," iv, 562; "Aen.," ix, 58. Higtius suggests *illa per et scopulos* from "Georg.," iii, 276.
[2] Added by me from "Aen.," xii, 256.
[3] Added by me from "Aen.," iii, 113 and ii, 225.
[4] Added by me from "Aen.," v, 88.

Sive animis sive arte vales, [si pectore robur [1]
Concipis,] et si adeo dotalis regia cordi est;
[Perge, decet. forsan regnumque et regia conjunx [2]
465 Parta tibi; lacrimas dilectae pelle Creusae.
Jason. Quid struis? aut qua spe gelidis in nubibus haeres?
Ventum ad supremum est.] nostrasne evadere demens
Sperasti te posse manus? opta ardua pinnis
Astra sequi clausumque cava te condere terra
470 Et famam extingui veterum sic posse malorum?
Medea. Haec via sola fuit, haec nos suprema manebat
Exitiis positura modum.
Sat fatis Venerique datum est. feror exul in altum,
Germanum fugiens et non felicia tela,
475 Ultra anni solisque vias. quid denique restat?
Et longum, formose, vale, et quisquis amores
Aut metuet dulces aut experietur amaros.

[1] Added by Burmann from "Aen.," xi, 368.
[2] Added by me from "Aen.," xii, 153; ii, 783 and 784; xii, 796 and 803.

FINIS

HOSIDIUS GETA'S TRAGEDY "MEDEA"

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

CREON, king of Corinth.
JASON, the husband of Medea.
Jason's attendant.
Messenger.
Medea's sons.
Ghost of Absyrtus.
MEDEA, the wife of Jason, whom he casts aside in order to marry the daughter of Creon.
Her nurse.
Chorus of Colchian women.

SCENE—AT CORINTH

Enter MEDEA.

Medea. O Sun be thou my witness now, and Earth
At my entreaty witness this, and ye
Avenging Furies and, from Saturn sprung
O Juno, thou. I fly to thee, for they
5 Assert that thou dost rights to wedlock give.
If old affection doth at all regard
Our human labours, then our effort aid,
O kindly Venus. Whosoe'er the god
That lookest down on this with kindly eyes,
10 Receive these words and turn thy wrath deserved
On evil deeds! Deserted, what shall be
My first lament? Our marriage and the gods
O' th' hearth besprinkled with a brother's blood
He's cast aside. What benefit to me

15 Has been the Syrtes, Scylla, or the vast
Charybdis, aye, or through the midst of foes
To have pursued our flight? O wicked Love,
What dost thou not the hearts of mortals force
To do? Thou forcest them to tolerate
20 A foreign lord's commands, to pass again
Through mishaps, and again to fall to tears,
But he 's by no amount of weeping moved;
Beneath his breast there creaks a deep-thrust wound.
My chastity is lost, and broken is
25 The ruthless monarch's covenant, and he 's
Forgetful of a lover's better fame,
Or else has been forgetful of his own.
My tears are shed in vain. Undoubted faith
Is nowhere to be found and cruel, he
30 Has mocked his loving wife with idle hope.
Why thus doth he requite my maidenhead,
Unless he 's seeking someone else's land,
And houses not to him at present known?
Ah piety, ah faith of olden times!
35 A captive woman I shall see the queen
In bedroom lingering in purple bright—
But not indeed escaping punishment
If aught of power my incantations hold.

CHORUS OF COLCHIAN WOMEN

O thou to whom the highest power
40 Of all the universe belongs,
If thou wilt yield to any prayers
And if by piety we may
Deserve it, then our effort aid.
And Juno, Saturn's daughter, thou

45 Whose care the ties of marriage are,
Dost see these things with kindly eyes?
O Dian, guardian of the groves,
Invoked with cries at night throughout
The cities where the roads are forked,
50 Dost thou for thrones reserve us thus?
O handsomest of husbands how
Couldst thou thus leave her desolate,
O man from dangers snatched away
In vain, amid the turning points
55 So many of thy past career?
For deep in mind remaineth stored
How he with valiant heart and arms
[Has sailed upon the open sea
And has from 'mid the foe reta'en]
60 A dowry [1] which was bought with blood.
Ah fortunate, too fortunate,
While god and fate did that allow!
Ah lost one, yet thou'rt ignorant!
What madness has deluded thee
65 To dangers to expose thy life?
Were these the last things waiting us?
Were fires and altars this to bring?
Now pay attention to our plan
And snatch the sword from out its sheath
70 And turn aside thy grief with steel.

Enter CREON.

Creon. O woman who art wandering within
Our territories as an enemy,
By sail your course divert; for neither are

[1] *I.e.*, the Golden Fleece.

Thy city and thy hateful race and spells
75 Maleficent unknown to us. Let not
Thy hostile face intrude and spoil our signs.
Medea. No stratagems are here, nor insolence
So great in conquered folks, and not in mind
Of mine is vigour such, nor have I thus
80 To battles come.
Creon. The news has not escaped
My ears as thou dost think, from whence thou dost
Derive thy race, an ever changeable
And fickle one. United brethren canst
Thou arm to strife, canst fun'ral torches bring
85 On men and canst encircle them with flame,
With branches in thy hand canst plead for peace,
Yet backward turn the stars and overturn
Our homes with hate. Thou hast a thousand names,
A thousand silent arts of injuring,
90 A heart exuberant in punishments,
And known it is what frenzied woman can.
Depart from these localities and spread
In flight thy sails upon the open sea.
Medea. O king, illustrious the race *that's thine,*
95 It is permissible for thee to be
Admonished by my voice. Of many things
A few to thee I'll mention, seeing that
An opportunity has offered, though
It is within thy right to threaten arms
100 And death to me. In wedlock don't desire
To join thy daughter, it will benefit
Thee *later* to remember this. Annul
The compact that's been made: commiserate
Thine own.

Creon. Don't conjure up such terrors great
105 For me, nor follow me with omen dire,
Thou weav'st in vain a chain of idle pleas,
His day is fixed for each. Whate'er is held
By th' law of Fate the dwellers in the sky
Themselves do not avail to cleave with steel.
110 Nor is my resolution altered now,
Nor doth it from the post *it's ta'en* withdraw.
Medea. I've no ill-will towards thy son-in-law
And nuptials worthy him. No longer do
I plead the ancient marriage which he has
115 Forsworn: 'tis time alone that I request,
And grant me leave to draw my ships ashore.
This final favour do I beg. Assist
A woman left alone, commiserate
A mother while the winter on the sea
120 Doth rage! O father we as well have borne
Some reputation and distinction too,
And thou thyself dost know it, nor can aught
Deceive thee. Now we vanquished, sad, (because
The wheel of Fortune turneth everything)
125 Upon the earth submissive fall and ask
A harmless strip of land, the violence
Of anyone may not subdue thee *there*.
Creon. Why seekest thou for pretexts such against
Myself, and for the ruin of my folks?
130 Whate'er it is I fear the prophecies
Of former seers. Now come! Cut short delays!
How long does it become me to be kept?
Medea. But whom are we to follow? Whither dost
Thou bid us go? Or where to place our homes?
135 *Creon.* To thy dear father's sight and presence *I*

Would bid thee go, while fears are unfulfilled
And while uncertain is the future's hope.
Medea. What love consisteth of I now do know!
We're e'en denied the welcome of the sand,
140 Nor is there any hope of flight nor power
To go from here, for battered are my ships,
And sons, a pair of them, I have in arms,
And icy winter with the north wind's blasts
Doth ruffle up the waves. If any show
145 Of piety so great do move thee not,
For not beyond a single night resign
Thyself to hospitality! Oh let
Me have this hope of thine, I'll bolder go!
Creon. And now at length have done. What thou with all
150 Thy wit hast sought I grant, and saying it
Again and yet again will warning give—
If dawn shall find thee ling'ring in this land
A single life for many shall be given. [*Exit* CREON.

A VOICE *within is heard.*

Voice. O maiden wedded to a worthy lord
155 Thou shalt be dowered. Torches quickly bring,
Ye men engaged to lead her from her room.
Then do ye all be well disposed in speech,
With twigs and leaves of trees your temples wreathe.

CHORUS

We deck us with a wreath of leaves
160 Throughout the city, and with vows
We kindle altars. Ah! ye hearts
Unmindful of the prophecies
Of former predicants of yours,

Of fate, and of your future lot!
165 Deluded much by empty hope
He slaughters sheep as is the wont
To Phoebus, and to Bacchus who
From care delivers, and to her
Whose care the bonds of wedlock are,
170 And piles their altars with his gifts.
When on a sudden everything
Appeared to tremble, fibres[1] too
Of import threatening appeared,
A hollow voice is to my ears
175 Inborne, "No trust do thou repose
In bridal chambers all prepared,
A cruel funeral thou'lt see!"
The limbs of men were taking rest,
And sleep possessed the animals;
180 With funereal song the owl
Doth into wailing draw its notes,
It thus denounces sullen wrath.
O citizens what frenzy great
Has seized you that you have your brows
185 With leafy chaplets covered o'er?
Ye men who are engaged to lead
Her from her bedroom have, I beg,
Compassion on your sov'reign lord!
[And we have been admonished not
190 Contemptuously to treat the gods.]
Reclining 'neath a canopy
Of beech the shepherd with a song

[1] *I.e.*, the muscular fibres of the internal organs of the victims which had been sacrificed. From the appearance of these the diviners drew their auguries.

Divine to contests challenges
The gods: he hung from leafy bough.[1]
195 What madness has deluded thee,
O shepherd, from the boulder's top
In singing Phoebus to surpass
Though by Minerva's skill divine?[2]
He hastily doth cleave the sky
200 With wings, as, fleeing from the realms
Of Minos, to the sky he dared
To trust himself, and leaves his life
Amid the breezes *o'er the sea.*[3]
Beside himself doth Pentheus see
205 The bands *of Maenads*, mothers fired
In heart, he calls the cruel bands
Of sisters *to a saner mind*:
His head was torn from neck away
The man they scatter through the fields.

Enter NURSE

210 *Medea.* Behold! of what avail is what I do,
What utterance o' th' mob doth reach my ears?
Amazed I was, and love adverse doth flow
With monstrous tide of wrath: it wearies me
To look upon the vault of heaven. What more

[1] The legend relates that Phoebus hung Marsyas from a bough and flayed him alive.

[2] Alluding to Marsyas playing on the flute or pipe which had been thrown away by Minerva, but still retained powers of producing heavenly music from the fact that she had used it.

[3] Icarus flew too high according to the legend, and the sun, melting the wax with which his wings were fastened to him, he fell into the sea and was drowned.

215 Could I, unfortunate, accomplish? I,
Who into everything myself have turned,
Whom victim's fibres, stars of heaven, obey!
Alas! by Furies fired I'm borne along!
The favour of my deed doth stand. Through flames
220 And through a myriad aftercoming darts,
Through varied mishaps, through so many risks
Of things that man I've snatched away from death.
I've taken impious arms, I do confess.[1]
But why, however, uselessly do I
225 Unroll these thankless things? What do I say?
Or where am I? The marriage contract now
Is ratified and all conditions are
Arranged. My wounds, I think, are left behind.
Nurse. The present time doth not demand such sights
230 As those, but mindful hear the words I say,
The consolations of thy lot severe,
And here and now within thine inmost soul
Receive my thought. Oh flee these cruel lands,
Oh flee in haste this avaricious shore.
235 *Medea.* O nurse to me *so* dear, the sea doth shut
Us with a barrier in, already land
Is lacking for our flight; the other part
O' th' Universe is ta'en away. From this
Their land the father and the son-in-law
240 Do recommend me *now* to get me gone.
Nurse. By evils don't be overcome, but thou
Against them must more boldly go, and thus
Thou mayest every toil both shun and bear.
For pardon do thou only ask the gods,
245 And suppliant do thou present thy gifts

[1] *I.e.*, opposed to her father.

Desiring peace, and causes of delay
Inweave with charms: and haply better things
Will follow in the track of wretched men.

Medea. Forgotten now by me are num'rous charms;
250 My voice is stifled in my throat: unmoved
My mind remains and by a hidden fire
Is wasted. Charms can even draw the moon
From heaven, stay the water in the streams,
From mountains drag the ash-trees. He himself
255 These herbs, these juices too, in Pontus cull'd
Did give to me. He careth nought for gods
And nought for charms.

Nurse. What plannest thou or with
What hope dost linger 'midst a hostile race?

Medea. [My mind's been scheming] now some little time
260 To enter on a fight or something great,
[And mingled grief and shame against my foes
Do arm me] whether to effect my guile
Or sink to final rest in certain death.

[*Exit* NURSE. MEDEA *goes to side of stage.*

Enter JASON *and* ATTENDANT

Jason. What ye with vows have sought is present here;
265 Ye must away with every fear. This house,
This country 's *yours*, no surface of the sea
You need to plough. From heart dispell your dread.
You've gained the land at length through various risks:
Things having been accomplished well, refresh
270 Your bodies, men: you like to join in dance.

Attendant. From what doth come this trembling in the land?
By what compulsion do the deep seas swell?
Why hastes the sun so much to dip himself

I' th' ocean? What is fixed *to happen* know
275 I not: the air is thickened into mist.
Observe the nodding world with pond'rous vault,
And th' moon, to brother's rays indebted, rise.
Jason. *A land* imbued with poisons, Media bears
Some juices harsh, and one by them may snatch
280 A bridal bed away and in the bones
A fire implant. [MEDEA *comes forward.*] Now say why thou dost come,
And on that very spot restrain thy step.
Medea. I fly to thee, to bend thee with my prayers
O husband sweet! these things do happen not
285 Without the will o' th' gods. [And right it is
For us to make for realms outside of this.]
If weariness so great of praise of mine
Has seized thee, take as comrades of thy fate
These men, with them procure thy walls.
290 *Jason*. Dost not from here precipitately flee
While yet there is the power to haste, with day
Already somewhat near? Thou knowest not,
Ah, lost one, knowest not nor dost perceive
The dangers which thereafter circle thee.
295 *Medea*. This home as well we leave. To thee a wife
Is being brought. To whom *is left thy* sire,
To whom am I abandoned, once declared thy spouse?
And this is settled in thy mind, a throne
By way of dowry to thy liking is
300 And foreign bridal beds again. Dost flee
From me? And have I followed this by land
And sea? Is this my final toil? Is this
The goal of journeys long? Are these to be
Our hoped for triumphs, this our coming back?

305 What *worth is now* thy sacred faith? Again
The cruel Fates are summoning me back.
O man from so great dangers snatched in vain,
Dost flee from me? By these my tears, by thy
Regard if any for a girl beloved
310 Doth touch thy soul, and by the board to which
Thou camest a stranger, by our wedlock too
And by the Hymeneal rites begun,
I do entreat thee, pity take upon
A soul enduring what is undeserved.
315 For what is there beside which now I can
Implore *for aid*? In Libyan waters thou
Thyself a witness lately wast to me:
The hollow rocks were then resounding far
With unremitting surge, and with the waves
320 So great arising from th' Ionian Sea:
The struggling winds and sounding tempests I
Suppressed, and th' monstrous rage of sky and sea.
Against the death of one unfortunate
And on behalf of all a single life
325 Did I oppose expecting this would be
A service to my love. But why do I
These devious things and lengthy prefaces
Unroll? About the sov'reign power I'm not
Concerned: I hoped for that what time I first
330 The bullocks strong and bulls exhaling fire
From out their nostrils to the plough did put,
And having sown the monstrous hydra's teeth
As seeds a host arose, and th' legion stood
Upon the open plain, and there a crop
335 Of darts with pointed javelins grew. Its head
An iron progeny did rear from fields

As hard. They wounds exchange between themselves
With mighty force, with missiles of their own
They're pierced, and through their breasts transfixed by wood
340 That's hard they in their wounds lay down their lives.
The branches with their gold upon a tree[1]
A mighty snake was guarding; hard *it is*
For any to endure the sight *of him*,
Of him unpleasant *'tis* to speak. But he,
345 Enduring hand of mine, his monstrous back
Relaxes. Whirling round his flaming eyes
As he beheld me, down his drooping neck
He laid and courted sleep. If thee no fame
Of things so great doth move, if safety 's ta'en
350 Away and Fortune has no backward step,
If country none there be which spouse of thine
To wretched ones may give—go, go, our pride!
A parent by her offspring meanwhile let
Thy spouse distinguished make thee, *but* I hope
355 With better auspices. Creüsa hence
I may be able to transport: at least,
If righteous deities avail for aught,
I hope that thou i' th' midst of rocks wilt drain
Thy punishment; thou'lt pay the penalty,
360 O villain, though thou little thinkest it,
Already things have duly been prepared.

Jason. Oh cease to aggravate thyself and me
With thy complaints. For I have gained my rest;
No surface of the sea I need to plough.
365 I had not hither come unless the Fates
Had granted me a place and settlement.

[1] *I.e.*, the branches of the tree upon which the Golden Fleece was hung.

Medea. Alas! wilt thou endure so many toils
Expended uselessly, and doth the bull
Beneath the ploughshare smoking, Pelias
370 *The monarch* somewhat weighted down *with years*
And th' brazen cauldrons bubbling on the flames,
The scaly dragon and the dowry bought
With blood no longer come across thy mind?
And this I dared in realms thine own [1]——
375 *Jason.* These regions have no bulls exhaling fire
From out their nostrils [ploughed for th' planted teeth
Of monstrous hydra], nor the harvest field
With helmets bristled and the crowded spears
Of men, nor do our weapons purpose force.
380 Dismiss this trouble *therefore* from thy breast.
Medea. But who had bidden thee, most impudent
Of men, to come to my abode? *Didst come*
There driven by the sea's uncertainties,
Or that my wretched brother's cruel death
385 Thou mightest see?
Jason. We, whether driven by
Uncertainty o' th' way or by the storms,
Have whither god and whither Fortune hard
Doth call us, followed. Into crime what god
Impelled thyself, what madness thee possessed
390 To both pollute thy hands and household gods
With brother's blood? Did I the weapons give?
Or did we bid thee cast his life to th' winds?
Or what unyielding sway *is this* of ours?
Medea. For me thou nought of pity hast, my spells

[1] "To set thee up" she was going to add when Jason interrupts. She alludes to the legend that Jason's father, Aeson, was the rightful king of Jolcos.

395 Thou carest nothing for: I'll make it come
To pass that after this thou no one dost
Excite with voice of thine. Nor darling sons
Nor Venus's rewards shalt thou possess.
Jason. Why pretexts seekest thou, and bandiest
400 Thy bootless bickerings? And now farewell
Since now the better part o' th' day is spent.
Medea. Thy fortune use; the work begun complete.
Jason. The way to th' king *is* now *the one* for me;
And what I tell thee, that is *what I mean.*
[*Exit* JASON *and attendant.*
405 *Medea.* At *all* my weeping did he sigh, or did
He *any* pity show for one who loves?
And do we further hesitate? He left
Me weeping and desiring many things
To say, and swift he into th' house withdrew.
410 What benefit are toils and kindly deeds?
My melancholy fates do wearied lie.
O where *is* now that god *who was* to me
Instructor, where the love disquieted
By Furies, where my conscious fortitude?
415 For why do I dissemble, or for what
Far greater things do I reserve myself?
To meet anew all chances doth remain,
To spread my sails for journey back, and th' fir 's[1]
Again about to see the haps o' th' sea.
420 'Twill be without thee, brother; yet if mine
The powers are not, if those above to bend
I am unable, hell below I'll move. [*Exit* MEDEA.

[1] *I.e.*, the fir of which her ship was built.

CHORUS

She at the words doth into wrath
Outflame with love of raving Mars,[1]
425 As used in Carthaginians' fields
The lioness with yellow neck
Hemmed by a ring of hunters in.
As fed on baneful herbage doth
A snake collect his length to coils,
430 Whom swollen, winter covered o'er,
His head for fights he 's lifted high
And darts from mouth his triple tongue.
[As], being by the Furies vexed
Orestes [with his dart pursued]
435 His mother armed with burning brands,
Excited over all the plain
He driveth her, and close before
His father's altars takes her life.
As every third recurring year
440 To Bacchus through the city howled
The Maenad,[2] at the crossing roads,
Amid the desert haunts of beasts,
With bloody garment gathered up
She calls the cruel sister's bands.
445 As 'neath the shade the nightingale[3]
Distinguished by its bloody breast
With its complaints doth fill the parts
Around, lamenting doleful strains
Distress it solaced with its song.

[1] *I.e.*, of mad slaughter.

[2] The Maenads were frenzied female votaries of Bacchus, who celebrated his orgies every third year.

[3] For the story of Philomela being transformed into a nightingale see Ov., "Met.," vi, 424 *seq.*

450 [As wretched Orpheus] greviously
Doth rage by reason of his wife
At solitary Strymon's wave,
On thee [1] he all alone did call
Upon its desert shore, thy soul
455 The while escaping if the gods
Below had knowledge to forgive.

Enter CREON [2] *and* MESSENGER

Messenger. Oh whither am I borne? whence have I come?
For fear doth rend me, sweat has broken forth
On all my body and doth bathe my bones
460 And limbs. My knees are trembling, torpor cold
My sluggish eyes is weighing down. My hair
Doth stand from fear, my voice sticks in my throat.
Creon. In what position is the power o' th' state? [3]
Whence rageth unrestrained this tempest loud
465 So suddenly? It 's mingled every sea
With sky, the lightnings flash from riven clouds.
Then speak and true these things to me explain.
Messenger. I shudder while relating all the sad
Affairs that I myself have seen i' th' midst
470 O' th' house. With bloody garments gathered up
Nocturnal altars she inaugurates
And hearths [4] i' th' midst, and strews the place with wreaths
And crowns herself with funereal leaves.
She twined her hair with bloody wreaths and freed
475 A foot from sandal, sprinkling honey moist

[1] *I.e.*, his wife Eurydice.
[2] ? Jason. See first line of first speech of ? Creon and lines at end of scene.
[3] This question is asked because atmospheric disturbances of various kinds were supposed to portend disasters to royalty. [4] *I.e.*, braziers.

And poppies drowsy with her garment loose.
And water she had sprinkled which would seem
To be the fountain of Avernus's,
And rolling bloodshot eyes, with bloody hands
480 Instead of gentle violet and bark
Of Cassia and the crocus golden red,
Upon her brazier for a light i' th' night
She burns the perfumed cedar and the squill
And heavy hellebore and sulphur live,
485 Enshrouding real things in gloom, and forced
To tears, invoking Hecat with her voice,
And girt with steel she calls upon a god
Unmentionable.[1]
These being uttered she her peace doth hold
490 And flashes fire from out her gleaming eyes,
Awaiting, ignorant of what 's about to come,
The portents which they bring. Then suddenly
Do clouds remove the sky and day, and th' earth
From its foundations trembled; th' aether doth
495 With lightning flashes gleam. Immediately
Are voices heard and wailing loud; there seemed
To be a sound of feet at hand and swish
Of cruel lashes; then amid the gloom
The dogs appeared to howl as nearer came
500 The goddess, and the river terrified
Doth backward flow, and frightened mothers pressed
Their children to their breasts. And hereupon
Allecto, in Gorgonean poisons steeped,
Arises, brandishing her torch and out
505 She thunders, "Give thou heed to these my words
I'm present from th' abode of Sisters fell,

[1] *I.e.*, Demiourgos or Demogorgon.

Within my hand I carry wars and death."
At length to her determining such things
She[1] thus replied in turn: "Thou'rt come at last
510 To share the toil with me, O goddess, now
In person here do thou inspire my soul.
In sunder tear the pact arranged and sow
The crimes of war (for thou art able) if
I've always on thine honours care bestowed."
515 At words like these Allecto into rage
Outflamed, and hissing terribly she this
From raving mouth did add: "O sister mine,
Dismiss this care from out thy breast, and now
If thou art ready war to wage and mix
520 Their marriage rites with mourning, and to bring
The fun'ral torches in and wreathe with flame,
Whatever through my art is possible
'Tis *only* requisite to bear in mind;[2]
As much as flames and blasts avail—desist
525 From praying for." She this had said and wings
She raises hissing with their snakes and seemed
To give her burning brands,[3] departing from
The upper heights *of air*. The other guile
And wrath with its pursuing flames attached
530 To th' work she had in hand, a double crown
With gems and gold and scales of serpents bound:
A flame enfolds her flying off, and then
In blinding darkness doth she shroud the house,
The view removing from one's eyes: as one
535 Who either sees or thinks he saw among
The brambles rough an unexpected snake,

[1] *I.e.*, Medea. [2] *I.e.*, thou canst have it for the asking.
[3] *I.e.*, seemed to give burning brands to Medea as she was departing.

And fearful of the danger doth begin
To speak but neither voice nor words ensue
Was I. Enough to hear is this.[1] Till when
540 Doth it become me to be kept? Depart,
And mindful bear these gleanings to the king. [*Exeunt.*

Enter MEDEA *and* NURSE

Nurse. He 's hit by this. Presented to the great
Divinities this better victim is.
And let them celebrate such nuptial rites,
545 Such wedlock *too, as theirs is like to be.*
Medea. Do thou, O Nurse, my children's fun'ral pile
Erect, but with the greatest secrecy.
And thou thyself with sacred fillet bind
Thy brows, set fire to sacred branches rich
550 And dusky pitch. The rites to Stygian Jove,
Which duly entered on I have prepared,
It is my purpose to complete and put
An end to troubles.
Nurse. All the middle ones
O' th' crowd have drawn aside and left a space.

Enter MEDEA'S *sons.*

555 *Medea.* Ah! hated race and things to Fates of mine
Opposed! Come hither, O my handsome lad.
What spirit he possesses! Thus was he
To bear his eyes, his hands, his features wont!
And I could wish his faithless father might
560 Himself be present as spectator here.

[1] This would be spoken by Jason, if Jason were substituted for Creon throughout the scene.

Son. Forbear to criminate thy pious hands;
Or whither has thy love of us been driven?
If watchfulness of mother's rights disturb [1]—
Thy children spare and take us off with thee
565 In spite of everything. However things
Befall, *there then would be for each of us*
A single common danger.

Enter the GHOST OF ABSYRTUS

Ghost. Look on me!
I from the dwelling of the sisters fell
Am present here: a hapless phantom *I*
570 My body all to pieces torn. [A ghost
I'll present be to thee in every place:
Thou'lt pay the penalty, O wicked one.]
[GHOST *fades away.*

Medea. [*To herself.*] Why hesitatest thou? It must be dared
By my right hand. The thing itself now calls.
575 The author of what must be dared am I.
Exhaust your ingenuity. If I
Do ask for lawful things, if I with lips
Do claim a man for punishment there is
No guilt in slaying him, and love doth not
580 Regard such *niceties.*

Son. O bitter foe
Why dost thou rail about my doleful fate?

Medea. The weapons bring to me and put an end
To this distress. In blood our going back
Is to be sought.

Son. Does neither love of ours

[1] He means if she was worried about losing her mother's rights by leaving them with Creusa as it had been decided she should.

585 Nor any justice soften thee, nor comes
It into mind of thine [to lead away
Thy little sons? No deities do press]
A mother with her children's blood to foul
Her hands. Has care of us forsaken thee,
590 And love been from a mother snatched away?
Medea. Your crime—'tis love and slighted beauty's wrong—
They've plunged you into these calamities. [*Stabs him.*
A brother shouldn't from a brother part. [*Stabs the other also.*
Enough of punishment has been secured
595 And through the foe a way is made, and I
With my right hand have sent the hated race
To lowest Tartarus. Now, now there *need*
Be no delay to drive my flying car. [*Exeunt omnes.*

Enter JASON *and* MESSENGER

Jason. Ah me! why are the walls disturbed with grief
600 So loud? Whate'er th' misfortune is, 'tis mine.
What finally awaits me? Say, for thou
To me before was not deceitful found.
Messenger. Behold! accomplished by thy spouse's art
The presents promised thee! Nor ask about
605 Thy people's monstrous grief. But if so great
A love within thy mind, so great desire
There is, thy fate I'll teach thee and unfold
In words. For when in view of all around
Upon the altars did she place her gifts
610 (Ah, hapless damsel!) with her beauteous eyes
Downcast, from every side together come
Through joyful portals men and matrons too

In crowds, and heap the altars with their gifts.
The pipe in th' worship of our fathers *used*
615 Its double strains doth give, when suddenly
Appears a portent wonderful to tell.
Behold! a swift destruction passes down
From th' highest portion of her frame and doth
Begin to scatter fire on all her clothes;
620 Her royal locks were fired, her crown was fired,
Her members followed and the sacred fire
Devoured her limbs. Companions scattered fly,
And each was these things fearing for herself.
They make for shelters in their fear, and thus
625 When stealthily they seek the hollowed rocks
The fire is raging unrestrained. Nor are
The strength of heroes and the streams upon
Her poured of use and, wretched to relate!
The arts they sought are but injurious.
630 Moreover that one[1] through the peoples, through
The trackless parts, access doth seek, by art
That's new she watched the place, [she into th' clouds
Doth flee and harnessed dragons take upon
Themselves the chariot of their mistress, she
635 (A bright refulgence lighted up their scales)]
With equal coils of serpents fastened them,
And added wings of wind; with naked sword
She's lightly armed, her car was stained with blood.
Jason. O whither shall I follow thee? or what
640 Doth now remain at last for wretched me?
Me, me, for here am I who did the deed,
Together all your weapons hurl on me!
This life destroy by any kind of death.

[1] *I.e.*, Medea.

Alas! I've been the cause of death to thee;
645 A woman was directress of the deed.

MEDEA *appears above in her chariot drawn by flying dragons.*

Medea. Now hither bend the gaze of both your eyes,
And lay our children's bodies in the grave;
Receive the final gifts of kin of thine,
And make a tomb and on it add the verse:
650 "Ferocious Love a mother taught to stain
Her hands with blood that's from her children twain,
With grief to mingle nuptials, and to stray
Above the winds of heaven in freer way."
Jason. O cruel mother, hast thou reckoned me
655 Deserving of so great a crime, and hast
Thou in their death defiled a father's eyes?
Arms, men, bring arms! serve out darts, mount the walls!
Medea. O whither dost thou rush to seek thy death?
The promised bridal-chambers don't forsake!
660 Encourager of crimes, now learn my mind,
If thou by either bravery or skill
Hast power, [if strength is fostered in thy breast,]
And if a kingdom 's so much to thy heart
As dowry, [onward go as it behoves.
665 Perhaps a kingdom and a royal bride
May be prepared for thee, so banish tears
For thy beloved Creüsa.
Jason. What dost thou
Contrive? or with what hope dost thou remain
I' th' chilly clouds? The final moment 's come.]
670 Devoid of wit hadst thou the hope that thou
Couldst reach on wings the lofty stars desired,

Or hide thyself enclosed in hollow earth,
And that thou thus wert able to annul
The infamy of evil doings old?
675 *Medea.* This was the only way, this was the last
Awaiting me to set a bound to hurts.
Enough to Venus and the Fates is given.
I'm borne away an exile on the deep,
My brother shunning, and unlucky darts,
680 Beyond the pathways of the year and sun.
Then what remains at last? O handsome one,
And whosoe'er shall either fear the sweets
Or taste the sours of love, a long farewell!

FINIS

OLD ROMAN MAGIC

IN the middle ages Vergil came to be considered a kind of master magician (Vincent of Beauvais, the fifty-seventh tale of the "Gesta Romanorum," etc.). This may have been due to the father of Vergil having, according to the "Life of Vergil" ascribed to Donatus, married the daughter of a certain Magius or Magus. Among other works of magic ascribed to him, he was said to have made and set up at Rome a brazen statue for each Roman province. Each of these statues was provided with a magic bell, and if a province meditated a revolt, the statue which represented it struck its bell. On this account, and because charms and magic are mentioned so much both in this tragedy and the Vergil from which its words are derived, I thought a short outline of what is known concerning the magic believed in and practised by the ancient Romans might be acceptable. There were books then specially dealing with the subject (Hor., "Ep.," xvii, 4), but as none of the Latin ones, at any rate, have come down to us, we have to piece our knowledge of the subject together from allusions in Latin literature generally. Belief in it was almost universal in those days. Just before this cento was made, Apuleius was publicly put on his trial for obtaining a rich wife by magic arts, and the speech he made in his own defence is still extant. That this was no trivial charge is shown by the fact that a certain Marinus, an advocate, was put to death on the same charge (Amm. Marcell., xxviii, 1, 14) at a later period.

A law prohibiting the practice of magic arts is found in the Twelve Tables (450 B.C.), and though it was always forbidden, it nevertheless continued to flourish as long as Rome existed.

I have arranged the subject under the following heads:

I. The powers and agencies invoked in the exercise of the magic art.
II. The persons who practised it.
III. The ceremonies they used in doing so.
IV. The materials used in these.
V. The purposes to which they applied the magic art.
VI. Magic in medicine.

I. Most of the ancient Roman magic consisted of necromancy, which is quite understandable when we consider that the powers invoked were the rulers of the realms below, where the departed spirits dwelt. So great was the connection between magic and the deities of the Lower World, that the latter were called "di magici" (Lucan, vi, 577; Tib., i, 2, 62). These were propitiated by the sacrifice of black victims in trenches at night, and everything connected with them was involved in darkness and dread. They were:

CHAOS, NIGHT, and EREBUS (Verg., "Aen.," iv, 510; Ov., "Met.," xiv, 404). According to Hyginus ("Praef."), Chaos was the son of Darkness, and by Darkness was the father of Night and Erebus.

NIGHT was represented as coming from her abode in Erebus and mounting the heaven in her light two-horse chariot "with star-producing reins" and calling back the constellations when the sun had set (Mart. Cap., ii, *init.*; Verg., "Aen.," v, 721; Tib., ii, 1, 87; Val. Flac., iii, 210). Her offspring are thus given by Cicero ("N. D.," iii, 17): "Aether and Day, and their brothers and sisters who are

thus named by the ancient genealogies, Love, Grief, Fear, Toil, Envy, Fate, Old Age, Death, Darkness, Misery, Complaint, Grace, Fraud, Obstinacy, the Parcae, the Hesperides, and Dreams, all which they relate to have been born of Night and Erebus." She was also the mother of the Furies by Dis (Verg., "Aen.," vii, 327). Cocks were sacrificed to her (Ov., "Fasti," i, 455).

Dis, Stygian Jove, or Pluto was the ruler of the Underworld, but was only invoked in incantations on special occasions (Verg., "Aen.," vi, 252; Ov., "Met.," vii, 249). Bulls with dark fillets and garlanded with yew were sacrificed to him (Val. Flac., i, 775), and the number 2 was sacred to him (Ov., "Met.," xiv, 386). He was the possessor of a helmet which rendered the wearer invisible, and which was sometimes lent to other gods and to men (Hyginus, "Ast.," ii, 12).

Hecate, a mighty and terrible but mysterious divinity, was the one principally invoked by witches and wizards. She was supposed to roam about at night accompanied by Stygian hounds, and appears to have personified the night side of nature. She also had the surname Brimo. Arnobius (ii, 71 and iii, 29) represents her as being the mother of Saturn, Ops, and Janus by Coelus, thus putting her in the place occupied by Terra in the ordinary genealogies. The name of Brimo is given by Arnobius to Ceres ("Adv. gentes," v, 20), but Ceres was the earth goddess (Eurip., "Bacch.," 276 and Diod. Sic.), particularly the productive earth was under her sway, and her rites resembled those of Tellus or Terra. Earth, Hecate, Ceres, and Proserpine have the same things told of them and assigned to them, in many cases indifferently.

Many accounts of her parentage are given, but all associate

her with the darkness. Bacchylides says she was the daughter of Night. Musaeus says she was the daughter of Asteria (the Star-maid) by Jupiter. But the generally received account was that she was the daughter of Asteria by Perses (Ov., "Met.," vii, 74), and therefore niece to Leto (the Dark-maid), or Latona (Cic., "N. D.," iii, 18). She was generally represented as the final phase of the triple Diana (Ov., "Fasti," i, 387). These phases were: Luna above, Diana or Trivia on the earth, and Hecate below it. Lucan (vi, 700) identifies the last phase with Proserpina, while Macrobius ("Sat.," i, 18, 23) identifies Luna and Ceres. Vergil ("Aen.," vi, 257) calls her "Hecate, a queen in heaven and in hell," and ("Aen.," iv, 609) "Hecate invoked by howling at the three ways by night." Statues of her with three heads, those of a horse, a woman, and a dog, were placed at the point of meeting of three roads, "Thou seest the faces of Hecate turning towards three directions that she may guard the paths divided into three roads" (Ov., "Fasti," i, 141). Hence she is called "triceps" (Ov., "Met.," vii, 194). Sometimes she was represented with three bodies also, back to back, "triformis" (Ov., "Met.," vii, 94) or "tergemina" (Verg., "Aen.," iv, 509). These triple heads and bodies were, of course, an allusion to the three phases already mentioned.

By Phorcys she was said to have been the mother of Scylla. In Thrace her worship was associated with that of Bendis (the moon goddess) and Cotys, and Horace ("Epod.," xvii, 56-59) mentions the Cotyttia in connection with witchcraft. Dogs, perhaps because they bay at the moon and were thought to announce her approach, or because Diana was a huntress, and black lambs were offered to her (Hor., "Sat.," i, 8, 27). So was honey.

The FURIES were ancient goddesses, the daughters of Night and Dis (Verg., "Aen.," vii, 327), and were three in number. Their names were Allecto, Tisiphone, and Megaera ("Aen.," xii, 845). They wore black garments, and their hair was wreathed with black snakes (Hor., "Odes," ii, 13, 26), and they had "wings of wind." They were ministers of vengeance, and carried a whip of serpents and a torch. They inflicted their vengeance on earth by wars, dissensions, and pestilence; in hell by unceasing floggings and torments. They were much invoked by witches and wizards in order to obtain the infliction of punishment on those on whom they wished to wreak their vengeance.

MERCURY is included among the "di magici," as he was wont to conduct the souls of the departed to the Lower World and bring them back from there when they were summoned to earth again by enchantments (Petr. Arbiter, 140; Verg., "Aen.," iv, 242; Stat., "Theb.," i, 306), and was the sender of dreams. These powers he exercised by virtue of his wand. He was also the inventor of magic (Macrob. and Mart. Cap.). Apuleius mentions him thus ("Apol.," 31): "Mercury the conveyer of incantations, Venus alluring the mind, Luna knowing the secrets of the night, and Trivia the mistress of the ghosts are wont to be summoned to the ceremonies of the magicians." Mercury seems to have been chiefly concerned with hydromancy or water magic (Apul., "Apol.," 42).

In the last resort the mighty and mysterious DEMOGORGON was invoked by the sorcerers. Concerning him see the second extract from Lucan in III. Lactantius Placidus on Stat., "Thebaid.," iv, 516, speaks thus about him: "The god Demiourgon whose name it is not permissible to know. But an infinity of philosophers and magicians, the Persians also,

confirm that there really is a chief and very great god besides those known gods who are worshipped in temples. . . . It may be that the Magi have seals which they deem to contain the name of the god, but his name cannot be known to any mortal." *Cf.* this tragedy, v, 343. From this place it would appear that, contrary to the practice in regard to other gods of the Lower World, the person invoking him had to be girt and have a steel weapon in the belt.

LARVAE were the ghosts of dead people which were unable to rest either on account of their own guilt (Apul., "de deo Soc."; Isid., "Orig.," viii, 11, 101), or from having met with some indignity, such as a violent death (Apul., "Met.," ix, 29; this tragedy, v, 400, 474; Ov., "Ibis," 155-160). They acted as agents to do injury to the living. They, too, were the "devils" that were supposed to cause madness in the living by taking "possession" of them (Plaut., "Capt.," iii, 4, 66; "Amph.," ii, 2, 145). Lemures were similar spectres. "They call the spirits of the silent ones Lemures" (Ov., "Fasti," v, 483). They also took possession of houses which were thus "haunted." See Pliny, "Epist.," vii, 27. Ovid ("Fasti," v, 429) gives a formula for exorcising them. The ancient Romans conceived of ghosts as black (Pers., v, 185), whereas the moderns imagine them white. They were thought to be of greater size than human beings. "They say that ghosts larger than men have wandered through the groves" (Sen., "Oed.," 175).

II. Magic was practised chiefly by women. Indeed, Pliny ("N. H.," xxv, 2) says they were the more able and fit for it of the two sexes. Circe and Medea were the most celebrated practitioners of the art; others were Erichtho (Lucan), Mycale (Ovid Seneca, and Nemesian), Perimede (Prop.).

The enchantresses or witches were for the most part old women, and, probably because they were so much resorted to for love philters and thus obtained many opportunities, most of them were either prostitutes or procuresses (Ov., "Amor.," i, 8, 19; Mart., ix, 29, 10; Hor., "Epod.," v; Prop., iv, 5). In fact, the word *saga* (wise woman) became synonymous with procuress (Amm. Marcell.). In the same way the word *venefica* meant either a witch or a poisoner, for the woman who followed the one profession often followed the other (Pliny, xxx, 2, 17). Women whose eyes had double pupils were thought to have the "evil eye." "Phylarchus relates that the race of the Thibii in Pontus and many others are of the same nature, whose marks are a double pupil in one eye and the likeness of a horse in the other, and moreover that they cannot sink in water even when weighted down by their clothes. . . . Among us Cicero is the author of the statement that all women indeed who have double pupils injure by their glance everywhere" (Pliny, "N. H.," vii, 2, 17). This "double pupil" was probably a secondary aperture or coloboma, as it is called, in the iris or coloured curtain of the eye. *Cf.* Ovid, "Am.," i, 8, 15, "a double pupil also flashes from her eyes and the light comes from a twin globe." Also *cf.* Pliny, xi, 37.

Women had, however, by no means a monopoly of the art. Apuleius ("Apol.," 90) mentions the following celebrated male exponents of it: "Carmendas, Damigeron, Belus, Moses, Jannes, Apollobex or even Dardanus himself." In many cases the calling was not taken up casually, but lads were articled to it as to a regular trade or profession (Am. Marcell., xxvi, 3).

Both witches and wizards exercised their calling for money as well as for personal gratification (Apuleius, ix, 29). The

skin of any person practising the art had to be free from freckly eruptions, as their divinities would neither appear to nor obey such (Pliny, "N. H.," xxx, 2, 16), neither would they heed a man who had just left the embraces of a woman (Aug., "Civ. Dei," x, 11).

III. Their ceremonies were always performed at night. The feet of the person officiating, or at any rate one of them, had to be bare (this tragedy, v, 335), so as to avoid having any fastening on the foot, the hair had to flow loose, and they wore a single loose black garment without any girdle. There had to be no constriction of any sort about the person, not even a ring on the finger. "Amid the tombs does she wander ungirt with flowing hair" (Ov., "Her.," vi, 89). "I myself saw Canidia with a black cloak thrown round her go with bare feet and flowing hair howling along with the elder Sagana" (Hor., "Sat.," i, 8, 23). "With hair thrown in all directions and with feet bare according to custom" (Stat., "Theb.," ix, 572). "Veiled in linen with robes unbound I paid nine vows to Trivia in the silent night" (Tib., i, 5, 15, 16). We sometimes find magic rites performed by naked women, especially at a menstrual time. "*It is said that* hailstorms and whirlwinds are driven away by the monthly *flow of a woman* being laid bare *to them and this avails* against the lightnings themselves, in this way *can* the violence of the heavens be averted in navigating, indeed tempests also, without the monthly *period being on the woman*. . . . At a menstrual time if women stripped naked go through the harvest field the caterpillars, worms, beetles, and other noxious insects drop down. Metrodorus Scepsius records that this was found out in Cappadocia owing to the multitude of Spanish fly. *They cause menstruating women* therefore to go

through the middle of the fields with their clothes pulled up above their buttocks. In other places heed is taken that they go with naked feet and hair and clothing loose" (Pliny, "N. H.," xxviii, 7, 77). Columella (x, 357-366) says: "But if no remedy avails to avert the plague [of insects] the arts of Dardanus come into play and thrice around the garden's beds and fence, but with her bosom bare and bared her feet and downcast with her tresses flowing loose, is led a woman, one who is for the first time acted on by the regular laws of youth and shamefaced *obscaeno cruore manat.* When she walking *as described* has purified this, (wondrous sight!) not otherwise than as a shower either of round apples or of nuts covered with husk rains from a shaken tree, do the caterpillars fall on to the ground with distorted body."

As a general rule, however, all magic rites had to be performed in a garment (Colobium, "Isid. Orig.," xix, 22, 24). "The Magi forbid *our private parts* to be bared in front of the sun and moon, or anyone's shadow to be besprinkled *with urine* by himself" (Pliny, "N. H.," xxviii, 6-end). This is one of the features which distinguish them from rites to the gods above which were frequently performed naked, *e.g.*, the Lupercalia (Ovid, "Fasti," ii, 267-302), the rite to Apollo described Pliny, "N. H.," xxvi, 9, 60. See also page 70. In the practice of the art they used incantations, which were invocations in set form of the powers of the lower world or other occult powers, accompanied by fumigations and the sacrifice of appropriate victims (Hor., "Sat.," i, 8, 27; Tib., i, 2, 61; Ov., "Met.," x, 243; Verg., "Aen.," iv, 509). These incantations they made in a sort of barking howl (Lucan, vi, 688; Ovid, "Met.," xiv, 405), "magic screeching" Tibullus calls it (xii, 47), and they were often unintelligible to those listening. Thus Ovid ("Met.," xiv, 366), speaking

of Circe, says: "She calls on unknown gods with unknown charms." Lucan (vi, 695-711) gives the following as Erichtho's incantation to recall the spirit of a dead man for the purpose of getting a knowledge of the future:

O Furies, monster of the Styx, and ye
The Punishments of guilty ones, and thou
O Chaos covetous of jumbling up
Unnumbered worlds, and th' Ruler of the earth
Whom that the death o' th' gods has been deferred
To lengthy centuries torments, O Styx,
And Fields Elysian that no witch deserves,
Persephone, who heaven and mother both
Didst hate, our Hecate's remotest phase,
Through whom the intercourse of silent tongue
Exists betwixt the spirits and myself,
And th' Keeper of the door o' th' wide abode
Who throws our entrails to the savage dog,
And Sisters soon to break the thread restored,
And thou O Ferryman o' th' burning stream
Already wearied, aged man, with ghosts
Returning to the world above and me;
Regard my prayers, if I do you invoke
With mouth enough polluted and accursed,
If I from human flesh ne'er fasting chant
These charms, if I have often teeming breasts
Bestowed and entrails bathed with tepid brains,
If any infant which has placed its head
And entrails on your dishes would have lived,
Do you obedience yield to this my prayer.

This spell having failed of its effect, she has recourse to threats (v, 730-749):

O Furies, heedless of my voice do ye
Delay the wretched spirit through the void
Of Erebus with cruel whips to drive?
I now will raise you by your real name
And, Stygian bitches, leave you in the light
Above: as keeper will I follow you

Amid the graves, amid the fun'ral rites,
I'll turn you out of tombs and drive you off
From all the urns. And Hecate, I'll thee
To th' gods display with pallid form and thin;
To them dissembling thou art wont to go
In other guise, and I'll prohibit thee
Appearing other than thou dost in Hell.
O Maid of Enna, I'll declare what feasts
Detain thee 'neath the monstrous bulk of earth,
On what agreement thou the gloomy king
Of night dost love, and those defilements which
Submitted to by thee *became the cause*
Why Ceres didn't wish to call thee back.
O vilest ruler of the universe,
Thy caverns being burst I'll send the Sun
To thee, and thou shall stricken be with day
Unlooked for. Do ye now obey? Or will
That being have to be addressed upon
Whose invocation ever doth the Earth
Alarmed begin to quake? Who contemplates
The Gorgon openly exposed, and doth
The trembling Fury with his lashes beat,
Who holds the depths of Tartarus, to you
Invisible: to whom you're those above:
Who sweareth falsely by the Stygian waves?

This threatening address proved immediately successful. Being troubled with fearful visions and spectral appearances after he had murdered his brother Geta, Caracalla believed himself bewitched by the spells of his enemies, and resorted to magic arts in order to ascertain from the dead what remedy could be had, but none answered his call save the kindred spirit of Commodus.

For the spells to be efficacious they had always to be used in the set form. In fact, charms or spells are forms of words which were thought to possess some occult power or influence over spirits to compel them to do what those using the spells

desire. Until the practice was introduced from the east, particular powers were seldom named in ordinary charms. The demon whose business it was to do what was required being compelled thereto by the mere form of words and the accompanying ritual. Pliny discusses the pros and cons of whether and why charms are of any avail in book 28, chap. ii. The charms themselves were often a nonsensical jingle, or altogether unintelligible, or in a foreign language (*e.g.*, Greek). Thus Lucan, referring to the hieroglyphic languages of Egypt (iii, 224), calls them "magic tongues." The charm had to be repeated a certain number of times, usually three or nine, but occasionally three times nine times, and the person repeating it had to spit at each repetition, and perhaps do other things.

Numbers thus played an important part in magic. Besides the charms having to be repeated a certain number of times, the number of victims, altars, libations, etc., was of importance. Pliny (xxviii, 2, 23) says: "Why do we believe odd numbers to be more forceful for everything?" "God delights in an uneven number" (Verg., "Ecl.," viii, 75). On this plan Servius says that "an odd number is immortal because it cannot be divided and an even one mortal because it can be, although Varro says the Pythagoreans think that an uneven number has an end and the even is infinite, and that on this account odd numbers are observed for the purpose of healing and many matters; for, as said above, the gods above delight in odd, the gods below in even numbers." He says the same on "Aen.," iii, 305, also on "Aen.," v, 77 and 78.

The number two was sacred to Pluto, the number four to Mercury (Macr., "Sat.," i, 19, 14). See Pliny, xxviii, 6.

Allied to the power of forms of words is the occult power

supposed to be exerted on one another by things of similar names, properties, or the like. Thus Pliny ("N. H.," xxii, 15, 39): "The herb scorpion gets its name from analogy, for it has a seed looking like a scorpion's tail and few leaves, and it is of use against the animal its namesake." Again (xxiv, 19, 106): "A herb growing on the head of a statue collected into a rag of anyone's clothing and applied wrapped in red linen is reported to relieve headache immediately." Again (xxvi, 9, 92): "Panax (all-heal) heals pani (lumps or swellings in the groin)." Again (xxvii, 12, 131): "About Ariminum a herb is known which they call reseda. It disperses all abscesses and inflammations. But those who cure these things with it add these words: 'Reseda, reseda (allay) these diseases, knowest thou, knowest thou what black disease has driven its roots here? Let it have neither head nor feet.' They say this three times and spit on the ground as often."

Allied also to spells and charms are talismans. Instead of repeating a charm or spell every time it was required, the wearing of the talisman ensured the operation of the spell bound up with it or engraved upon it being constant. An example of the talisman is found in the well-known Ring of Gyges. The story of it is thus told by Cicero ("de Off.," iii, 9): "When from certain heavy rains the earth had yawned asunder, Gyges descended into that chasm and, as the story goes, observed a horse of brass in the side of which was a door. Having opened this, he saw the body of a dead man of extraordinary size and a gold ring on his finger. As he took this off he put it on his own finger and then betook himself to the assembly of the shepherds, for he was the king's shepherd. There, when he turned the bezel of this ring to the palm of his hand, he was seen by none, though he himself saw everything. And so he made

use of this advantage of the ring and brought dishonour on the queen and with her assistance slew the king his lord and removed those whom he judged likely to oppose him; nor could anyone discover him in these crimes. So by the aid of the ring he suddenly became King of Lydia."

The celebrated girdle of Venus was also a permanent charm or talisman ("Iliad," xiv, 214; Martial, vi, 13, 8; xiv, 206 and 207; Claud., "de Nupt. Hon. et Mar.," 124), compelling everyone to love its wearer. See also extract from Pliny, "N. H.," xiii, 25, in Cap. IV, A, below.

Allied to talismans were amulets, which were stones, plants, insects, or portions of animals, or inscribed scraps of paper or parchment worn suspended from the neck or tied to any other part of the body to prevent or cure disease or avert the evil eye. A phallus was often used for the latter purpose. Varro says ("L. L.," vi, p. 99, Bipont ed.): "A certain disgraceful little thing is hung from the necks of boys that by reason of its good omen nothing may harm them." Pliny says the same ("N. H.," xxviii, 4), and adds that it was hung under a triumphing general's chariot for the same reason. It has also been found painted on the walls of houses in Pompeii and represented in obscene figures on lamps for the same reason, that it averts witchcraft from the place and returns the effects of the evil eye on the giver of the envious glance. Largely for this reason Priapi were set up in gardens (Pliny, "N. H.," xix, 4, 19). All obscene sights, motions, and actions were against witchcraft.

To reverse a spell or undo the effect of an enchantment the charm was repeated backwards and the person touched with the reverse end of the wand (Ov., "Met.," xiv, 300), or the magic wheel was turned in the opposite direction (Hor., "Epod.," xvii, 7).

IV. We may consider the things used for the purposes of magic under three heads: A, botanical; B, zoological; C, inanimate.

A. Herbs or plants were extensively used for magic purposes and were believed to possess great potency, but although they are frequently spoken of in a general way in this regard they are seldom named individually. Though believed to have such powers they were often simple, everyday plants. Thus violet, cassia, and crocus ("Medea," v, 339), narcissus ("Ciris," v, 370) were used in charms to secure love; poppies, cypress, hellebore, and squills ("Medea," v, 336 and 341) in charms of more direful import.

Laurel was used in love charms (Verg., "Ecl.," viii, 82; Prop., iii, 25). As it burned in the flame of the bitumen or sulphur, it was supposed to make the person named burn in like manner for the one who fired it. Infusions of laurel leaves were used as a wash, together with a draught of dill, to restore witches to their proper shape after they had been transformed as owls (Apul., "Met.," iii, 23).

Roses would restore a transformed ass to his proper shape (Apul., "Met.," iii, 25).

Black beans were used in exorcising ghosts (Ov., "Fasti," ii, 576 and v, 436).

Fucus (Auson. Mosel., 309) was probably used because of the way litmus changes its colour, being red in the presence of acids, blue in the presence of alkalies.

The herbs of Thessaly and Pontus were regarded as especially potent for magical purposes.

The following examples of the use of herbs for magic or as love charms are culled from Pliny's "Nat. Hist.":

xiii, 25. "Fruits and trees are also produced in the sea . . . Juba relates that round the islands of the Troglodytes

there is one which is called chariton blapharon (*i.e.*, eyelids of the Graces), and that as it is efficacious in love matters women make bracelets and necklaces of it" (*i.e.*, coral).

xxii, 8. "What is reported about this herb (Eryngion, a kind of thistle) is marvellous, namely, that its root bears the likeness of the genital organs of one or the other sex. It is rarely found, but if the male is found by men they are sure to become objects of love. On this account was Phaon of Lesbos loved by Sappho."

xxiii, 6. "If anyone, freed from every constriction of belt, of shoes, and even of ring, shall pluck one of these (pomegranate blossoms) with two fingers, namely, the thumb and fourth finger of the left hand, and having purified his eyes with a light touch of it shall put it into his mouth and swallow it in such a way that it does not touch on the teeth, it is affirmed that he will suffer from no weakness of the eyes in that year."

xxiv, 17. "The herb Aglaophotis (?peony) which has received this name from the admiration of men for its distinguished colour . . . the Magi use this when they wish to call up the gods."

"Anacampseros (? stonecrop) . . . at whose very touch loves have returned, even when laid aside with hatred."

xxv, 9. "The Magi rave about this plant (vervain) that those anointed all over with it *are able* to obtain what they like, to drive away fevers, to reconcile *estranged* friendships, and to heal the disease of anyone. *They say that it* ought to be gathered about the rising of the Dog Star, in such a way that neither sun nor moon may see *it done*, honeycombs with their honey having beforetime been offered to the Earth as an atonement: that, a

mark being made round it with steel, it is to be dug up with the left hand and raised up high, and to be dried in the shade, leaves, stalks, and roots separately. They say that if a supper room be sprinkled with water in which it has been soaked, the banquets will be made more vivacious."

xxvi, 4. "The Magi said 'that streams and pools could be dried up by the herb Aethiopis, and all closed places could be opened by a touch by those made fragrant with it.'"

xxvii, 8. "Catanance is a Thessalian herb . . . it is only used for love potions . . . and chosen for this purpose by inference, for the reason that in drying it curves itself in after the fashion of a dead kite's claws." Therefore it seems they thought it ought to catch the beloved object and hold it fast.

"Cemos is used for the same purpose." Some think this plant was our Lady's smock, others dodder.

xxvii, 12. "As for phyteuma [groundsel] . . . its only use is for love potions."

Herbs for use in incantations had to be reaped at midnight with a brazen or bronze sickle (Verg., "Aen.," iv, 573; Ov., "Met.," vii, 227; Macr., v, 8-13). For this use of bronze, a relic probably of times before the iron age, compare the use of the bronze skewer (Ov., "Fasti," ii, 577, quoted chap. V, v) and brazen goblets (Ov., "Met.," vii, 247).

To increase the magic potency of the herbs the witches claimed to have the power to call down the moon, which then hovered as it were over and shed a poisonous foam on the herbs beneath (Lucan, vi, 506 and 669). This "foam" was also used to make other objects baleful *e.g.*, Harmonia's

necklace (Stat., "Theb.," ii, 284). This bringing down the moon was supposed to be accomplished by the magic rhombus. "Who now will know how to draw down the moon with Thessalian rhombus?" (Mart., ix, 29, 9. See also xii, 57, 17 and Prop., ii, 28, 35). On the rhombus see C, *g*, of this chapter. By the commonalty it was thus thought that magic was the cause of eclipses of the moon, and that these could be averted by the clanging of brazen vessels or cymbals (Tib., i, 8, 21; Juv., vi, 442 and 3, and many places).

B. With regard to animal products used in magic it is safe to say that the more disgusting a thing was, the more likely was it to be used and the greater virtues ascribed to it by the magicians. Numerous examples may be found in Pliny ("N. H.," 28). The articles used may be classified as follows:

(*a*) Various portions of dead bodies, skulls, bones, hands, blood, etc. (Apul., "Met.," iii, 17; Hor., "Sat.," i, 8; Ov., "Her.," vi, 90; Tac., "Ann.," ii, 69). To get these the witches frequented tombs and funeral pyres.

(*b*) Things causing death, as nails with which persons had been fastened to crosses (Apul., "Met.," iii, 17), arrows with which someone had been shot and killed. "Thus also Orpheus and Archelaus write that arrows drawn out of a body and placed under people lying down are an incentive to love if they have not touched the ground" (Pliny, "N. H.," xxviii, 4).

(*c*) Portions of living bodies, as hair (Apul., "Met.," iii, 16), nail parings (Pliny, "N. H.," xxviii, 7, 86).

(*d*) Hippomanes. This was by far the best known and most used ingredient of love potions. The name was applied to several different things.

(i) An excrescence on the forehead of a new-born

foal (Verg., "Aen.," iv, 515; Pliny, "N. H.," viii, 42, 165; Solinus, 57).

(ii) The discharge from the genitals of a mare in heat (Verg., "Georg.," iii, 280; Ov., "Am.," i, 8, 8; Tib., ii, 4, 58), or that from a pregnant mare, according to Prop., iv, 5, 18.

(iii) A plant which acted as an aphrodisiac on mares ("Serv. in Georg.," iii, 281).

(*e*) Wolf's beard (Hor., "Sat.," i, 8, 42), entrails (Ov., "Met.," vii, 270).

(*f*) Stag's liver (Ov., "Met.," vii, 273), marrow (Lucan, vi, 673).

(*g*) Hyaena, parts (Lucan, vi, 672). The magicians made much use of parts of the hyaena. See Pliny, "N. H.," xxviii, 8.

(*h*) Snakes (Lucan, vi, 677-679), their teeth (Hor., "Sat.," i, 8, 42), sloughed skins (Ov., "Met.," vii, 272), poisonous saliva (Sen., "Med.," 732), bones (Prop., iii, 6, 28).

(*i*) Frogs (Hor., "Epod.," v, 19; Juv., iii, 44; Prop., iii, 6, 27).

(*j*) Owls' wings (Ov., "Met.," vii, 269), feathers (Prop., iii, 6, 29; Hor., "Epod.," v, 20), heart and viscera (Sen., "Med.," 733).

(*k*) Eggs (Hor., "Epod.," v, 19).

(*l*) Milk. On Verg., "Aen.," iii, 68 and v, 78, Servius says that the spirits of the departed take particular pleasure in offerings of blood and warm milk, and that for this reason mourning women lacerate their faces and beat their breasts to force the milk out of them. After saying that a witch had assembled crowds of ghosts by her magic howling, Tibullus (i, 2, 48) goes on, "now having

sprinkled them with milk, she bids them retire." In Stat., "Theb.," iv, 453, warm milk is one of the offerings made in calling up spirits.

(*m*) Saliva. See Pliny, "N. H.," xxviii, 4. Human saliva was considered a great averter of witchcraft and mischances. Thus, when they met a witch it was customary to spit in her eyes, and any person they met who limped or was lame in the right foot they treated in a similar manner. If they saw a person in an epileptic fit they spat on him to escape the contagion. They spat into their right shoe before they put it on in a morning and upon any place where they had formerly been in danger as they passed it. They also spat on the ground to fortify the action of a charm, and by a person spitting into the hand with which he had given a blow the pain of the person struck was believed to be at once assuaged. Frogs and toads were believed to burst asunder if one spat on them, so were serpents if one spat into their mouths as they gaped. Fasting saliva was believed to be especially potent and a sure preservative against the poison of serpents.

(*n*) Honey (H. G., "Med.," 336; Stat., "Theb.," iv, 453; Sil. Ital., xiii, 432).

(*o*) Wax, in lumps or figures for use with corresponding ones of clay, or made into figures into which needles were to be stuck (see chaps. IV, C, *a*, and V, ii), or as tablets on which a name might be written.

C. The following materials drawn from inanimate nature were used in magic:

(*a*) Clay. A small moulded lump of clay was placed beside a fire along with a corresponding one of wax, and as the

same fire hardened the lump of clay and melted the lump of wax, so the charmer hoped that the heart of the person whom she sought to influence would be hardened towards other girls and softened towards her (Verg., "Ecl.," viii, 81 and 82).

(*b*) Sulphur (H. G., "Med.," 342; "Ciris," 369). In magic, as stated in v. 342 of the "Medea," its chief use seems to have been to veil things in obscurity during the rites. As everything in the Lower World is represented as sulphurous (Stat., "Theb.," i, 91, and elsewhere, especially Albericus Philosophus on Pluto), perhaps it was supposed to provide a more home-like atmosphere for the spirits called up. It was also largely used in purificatory rites, probably to atone in a mild way as it were for the person on whose behalf they were performed not being in the sulphury regions altogether. Thus, if anyone was recovering from illness and thus cheating the di Manes, a purification was necessary (Tib., i, 5, 11). Flocks were purified by it in case they should have eaten the grass off graves (Ov., "Fasti," iv, 735). And a purification for the whole state was made to Februus, another name for Pluto, in February each year (Macr., "Sat.," i, 13).

(*c*) Bitumen, or pitch, was probably used on account of its black colour as well as its combustible properties. Bay twigs were burned with it, and it was supposed to cause the person on whose account it was lit to burn for the one who lit it in the same vigorous way as it burned (Hor., "Ep.," v, 52; Prop., iii, 25; Verg., "Ecl.," viii, 82). Explaining "et fragiles incende bitumine lauros" ("Ecl.," viii, 82), Servius says: "That is, burn the bays with divine fire, for bitumen is said to be produced

from lightning. Therefore because lightning frequently falls there, a lake near Babylon abounds with this substance to such an extent that Semiramis was said to have made her walls of it. And since it sticks together and burns well it is taken up for the purposes of magic in order that the husband may be stuck together to and burn towards his love."

(*d*) Lead. Tablets were made of this on which names of persons were inscribed. Through these tablets a nail was then driven (*defixio*) and the tablet thrown into a stream or buried. The person named on it was thus bewitched (see chap. V, ii).

(*e*) Pebbles. "Stones fetched from the most distant East and sand which the ebbing tide of oceans has washed" (Ov., "Met.," vii, 266) were used by Medea.

Precious stones of various sorts. "They say that appearances of the gods are called out in hydromancy by anancitis" (a precious stone). (Pliny, "N. H.," xxxvii, 11, 73.) Several instances in chap. x of the same book.

(*f*) Threads of three different colours (see Verg., "Ecl.," viii, 77; Nemesianus, quoted chap. V, iii).

"She brought a skein twisted from threads of different colours out of her bosom and tied it round my neck. Next she took up some dust mixed with her spittle and marked my forehead with it in spite of my resistance. Having done this with a charm she bade me spit thrice and throw pebbles which she herself had charmed and wrapped in purple into my bosom three times. Then, having applied her hands to me she began to try the strength of my groins. Quicker than speech the nerves responded to her power and filled the little old woman's hand *ingenti motu*" (Petr. Arb., 131).

(*g*) Rhombus. Exactly what this was is not known. It was something that whirled and that was used in connection with threads (Ov., "Am.," i, 8, 7). "He is drawn by the thready wheel of the rhombus" (Prop., iii, 6, 26). It was probably of brass or bronze and of the shape implied by its name.

It is usually translated "magic wheel." Horace ("Epod.," xvii, 7) refers to it as "turbinem," and it was used for causing attraction. Thus it was used to draw down the moon from the heavens (Prop., ii, 28, 35; Martial, ix, 29, 9; xii, 57, 17).

It is supposed to have been the same as the Greek *ιυγξ* which was used for the same purposes (Theocritus, "Idyl.," ii; Xen., "Mem.," iii, 11). A whirling object draws threads or the like round itself as it whirls, hence probably the idea that such an object possessed powers of attraction.

(*h*) Wands do not appear to have been much used in Roman magic; Circe is the only person mentioned as using one (Verg., "Aen.," vii, 190, where her wand is described as golden; Ovid, "Met.," xiv, 278).

(*i*) Chafing dishes, braziers, or cressetts, in which perfumed woods were burned (H. G., "Medea," 352, and Verg., "Aen.," vii, 13), partly for light and partly for the smoke which gave a desired obscurity.

(*j*) Lamps, probably burning perfumed oil, were used sometimes merely for light, at other times to furnish a point of light reflected on the surface of water in a basin or the like, at which anyone could gaze intently until he mesmerized himself (Apul., "Apol.," 42). "As Osthanes relates, there are more kinds of it (*i.e.*, magic). For a female soothsayer foretells both by water and

globes and air and stars and lamps and basins and axes and many other ways besides the conversations of ghosts and spirits from below" (Pliny, "N. H.," xxx, 2).

(*k*) Water. "On the people of Tralles consulting the magic art in an enquiry about the issue of the Mithridatic war, a boy while contemplating *the reflection of* an image of Mercury on some water chanted the things which would come to pass in 160 lines *of verse*" (Apul., "Apol.," 42). The water in this case would be used in a basin or other vessel on account of its reflecting surface. The waters of magic wells were similarly used, and there the surface reflected what it was desired to know or see. I don't know of any mention of magic wells in Latin literature, though doubtless they existed in Italy as they did in Greece (Pausanias) and the East (Melito).

"Or which a ghost from the dead indicates *in a vessel filled* with magic waters" (Prop., iv, 1, 106). Probably refers to water used as above described.

Water from Lake Avernus, real or pretended, was used in magic rites on account of its deadly properties (H. G., "Medea," 337, and Verg., "Aen.," iv, 512). "Sagana having her gown tucked up and sprinkling the waters of Avernus throughout the dwelling" (Hor., "Epod.," v, 26).

Enchantresses were also in the habit of sprinkling their victims with water. Diana (Ovid, "Met.," iii, 189) and Proserpina (Ovid, "Met.," v, 544) do the same previous to transforming those who had offended them.

For water as an enchanting agent, see also chap. V, ix.

(*l*) Mirrors were probably used in magic from their resemblance to the surface of water in magic wells, etc.

"There was besides this folly in Julianus, that through the magicians he avoided very many things by which he had thought that the hatred of the people would be softened down or the arms of the soldiers held in check. For they both sacrificed certain victims not consistent with Roman rites and chanted profane charms; and those things which they say are done at the mirror, in which blindfolded boys are said to see the future in a charmed whirl, Julianus did. And then the boy is said to have seen both the coming of Severus and the decease of Julianus" ("Script. Hist. Aug. Did. Jul.," 7).

These mirrors may have had designs drawn on them which were invisible when the mirror was bright but which came into view when it was breathed upon or otherwise clouded with moisture.

(*m*) Drawings, sometimes fanciful, sometimes copied from the motions of the heavenly bodies (Aug., "Civ. Dei," x, 11).

V. Arnobius ("Adv. Gentes," i, 43) gives a good summary of the purposes to which magic arts were applied. These were:

(i) To know things impending beforehand. For examples of this see Lucan, "Pharsalia," vi, 430 to end; Amm. Marcel., xxix, 1, 29-32. This was usually done by the ordinary methods of augury. Magic being as a rule only resorted to in extraordinary cases.

(ii) To inflict a deadly and wasting disease on whom they chose. This was accomplished by making an image of wax which was supposed to represent the person to be afflicted. "The images of wax she pierces too, and into the wretched liver does she thrust the fine needles" (Ov., "Her.," vi, 91). As the image melted away in the

warmth of the fire beside which it was placed, so the person it represented was supposed to waste away, and when a needle was thrust into the figure they were supposed to feel pain in that part of their bodies corresponding to the part of the figure pierced. Sometimes two effigies were used, one of wool, which was probably black and represented the cloudy powers of the Lower World, and the other of wax to represent the individual whom by means of the witch's incantations the former was set to persecute. "There was also an effigy of wool and another of wax, the woollen one was the larger, and was to crush the smaller one with punishments. The waxen one was standing submissively as one which was already about to perish by methods used for slaves" (Hor., "Sat.," i, 8, 30).

The written name of the person answered the same purpose as an image of him. The name was usually written on a leaden tablet and, a nail having been driven into it, it was buried in the ground. Numbers of these leaden tablets have been found with names on them and nails driven through them. This was called "defixio." A waxen tablet might be used for the same purpose. "Does my body languish devoted by a Thessalian drug? Does charm and herb injure wretched me? Or has a witch nailed down my name in Punic wax, or has she driven the fine needles into the midst of my liver?" (Ov., "Amores," iii, 7, 29). A person's footprints would answer the same purpose as his name. Pliny ("N. H.," xxviii, 6, 63) says that epilepsy may be thus nailed down and a sufferer freed from it by driving a nail into the spot of ground touched first by his head when he fell.

Tacitus ("Ann.," ii, 69) gives an account of magic

arts used to compass the death of Germanicus: "And certainly there were found hidden in the floor and in the walls of his apartment disinterred remains of human bodies, incantations and spells, and the name of Germanicus inscribed on leaden tablets, half-burnt cinders smeared with blood, and other horrors by which in popular belief souls are devoted to the gods below."

(iii) To sever the affections of relatives or lovers. "What wise woman, what wizard, what god will be able to free thee with Thessalian drugs?" (Hor., "Od.," i, 27, 21). "This same witch actually told me that she could dissolve my love by incantations or herbs" (Tib., i, 2, 59). An example where it failed is given here:

"*Mopsus:* What does it benefit me that the mother of the rustic Amyntas has purified me thrice with filletts, thrice with a sacred bough, thrice with the vapour of frankincense, burning the crackling laurels with live sulphur and pours the ashes out into the stream with averted face, when thus wretched I am every way inflamed for Meroe.

"*Lycidas:* These same things, the many-colourèd thread also *have been done* for me, and Mycale has carried round me a thousand unknown herbs. She has chanted the charm by which the moon swells, by which the snake is burst, by which the rocks run and standing corn removes and the tree is plucked up. Lo! my handsome Jollas is nevertheless more, is more to me" (Nemesianus, "Buc.," iv, 62).

(iv) To open without keys places which are locked. Cf. Pliny, "N. H.," xxvi, 4, quoted chap. iv, A. Also Apul., "Met.," i, 11 and 12; Aug., "Civ. Dei," x, 11.

(v) To seal up anyone's lips. "He suddenly forgot every-

thing he intended to say and was wont to declare that this had been caused by the magic drugs and enchantments of Titinia" (Cic., "Brutus," 60). Ovid ("Fasti," ii, 573) relates the ceremony used thus: "Behold! an old woman full of years sitting in the midst of the girls performs the rites of Tacita (the silent one): she is hardly silent herself, however. With three fingers she places three pieces of frankincense under the threshold where the tiny mouse has made a hidden way for itself. Then she holds the charmed threads with melted lead (or, according to another reading, with a brown rhombus) and turns in her mouth seven black beans, and she burns on a fire the sewed-up head of a herring which she had fastened up with pitch *as well* and which she had pierced with a brazen needle. Wine also she drops on it: whatever is left of the wine either she herself or her companions drink, she herself the larger part however. 'We have bound up hostile tongues and enemy mouths,' she says, departing."

(vi) To weaken, urge on, or retard horses in a chariot race. See Jerome's "Life of Hilarion," and Amm. Marcell., xxvi, 3.

(vii) To inspire wives or husbands with love for one another or others. This was accomplished by various charms, or by love potions, or both combined. Verg., "Ecl.," viii, 64-109; Hor., "Epod.," v; Apul., "Met.," ix, 29, are all instances where magic is used to try to recover love which has been lost.

Whether used alone or along with incantations, love potions or philtres were in great request among the ancient Romans, and references to them are very numerous. Serious results often followed their administra-

tion. Pliny ("N. H.," xxv, 3) says that Lucullus lost his life through taking a love potion. According to the Eusebian Chronicle the poet Lucretius was driven mad by such a potion and committed suicide. Caligula was said to have been driven mad by a love potion administered to him by Caesonia (Suet., "Calig.," 50), and Juvenal (vi, 615) says that she infused the whole forehead of a new-born foal in the potion that she gave him.

To the foregoing headings of Arnobius may be added:

(viii) To enable men or women to have children. Thus Medea undertakes to enable Aegeus to have offspring by her (Eurip., "Med."; Plutarch, "Theseus").

(ix) To cause either themselves or others to be transformed into the shape of animals. The celebrated Circe thus transformed the companions of Ulysses into wild beasts (Hyg., "Fab.," 125), or into swine according to others (Ov., "Met.," xiv, 249-286). She kept a kind of menagerie of men transformed into animals (Verg., "Aen.," vii, 15-20). She also transformed the lower part of Scylla, a lovely nymph, into monsters (Ov., "Met.," xiv, 8-67) and Picus into a woodpecker because he rejected her advances (Ov., "Met.," xiv, 320-396). William of Malmesbury (ii, 10) tells a story of two witches at Rome who thus transformed people into various useful animals and then sold them.

Witches were wont to transform themselves into owls to carry on their nefarious practices by night (Apul., "Met.," iii, 23; Ovid, "Amores," i, 8, 13, 14; "Fasti," vi, 142). Apuleius, in the place cited, describes how the metamorphosis was effected. Men sometimes be-

came owls, "There is a rumour that there are men in Hyperborean Pallene who are accustomed to have their bodies clothed with light feathers when they have dipped nine times in the Tritonian Lake (I don't indeed believe it), the Scythian women also having sprinkled their limbs with poison are related to exercise the same arts" (Ov., "Met.," xv, 356).

Wizards (witches also according to Prop., iv, 5, 14) were wont to transform themselves into werwolves (Verg., "Ecl.," viii, 97, and compare Ov., "Met.," vii, 271). Pliny ("N. H.," viii, 22) and Petronius Arbiter (61 and 62) give stories of werwolves in which water is the enchanting agent, not herbs.

The place cited in Pliny reads thus: "One of the stock of a certain Anthius chosen by ballot of the family is led to a certain pool of this region and having hung his clothing on an oak tree swims across it and goes away into the wilderness and is transformed into a wolf and companies with the rest of his kind for nine years. If during this time he has kept himself from man he returns to the same pool and when he has swum across it recovers his shape, with the decay of nine years added to his former appearance, also (this is more fabulous) he takes again the same clothing."

The story of Niceros from the place cited in Petronius Arbiter is as follows: "When I was still a slave we lived in a narrow street, the house is now Gavilla's. There, as the gods will it, I began to make love to the wife of Terentius the innkeeper: you knew Melissa the Tarentine, a very lovely, round, and frisky thing. But, by Hercules, I did not care for her in a carnal way or on account of sexual intercourse, but rather because she

was so good-natured. If I asked her for anything it was never refused me; did she make a penny, I had half of it; whatever I had I deposited in her lap, nor was I ever defrauded. Her mate died at *his owner's* country seat. And so I schemed and double-schemed how I might get to her by hook or by crook. But you know in tight corners friends appear. My master happened to have gone away to Capua to procure some elegant trash. I seized the opportunity and persuaded a guest of ours to go with me to the fifth milestone. For he was a soldier and as brave as Hell. We trotted off about cockcrow, the moon was shining as bright as noon-day. We came among the tombs *beside the road*: my man begins to make his way to the pillars. I sit down singing and count the pillars. Thereafter, as I looked back at my companion, he had stripped himself and laid all his clothes beside the road. My heart was in my mouth and I stood as though dead. But he made water all round his clothes and suddenly became a wolf. Don't think I'm joking, I don't count anyone's fortune great enough to induce me to lie about it. But, as I was saying, after he became a wolf he began to howl, and fled into the woods. At first I didn't know where I was, then I went up to take his clothes but they were turned into stone. If I wasn't ready to die for fear no one ever was. Nevertheless, I drew my sword and slashed at the shadows all along the road until I arrived at my mistress's country house. I went in like a ghost and nearly gasped out my last breath, the sweat was running down my legs, my eyes were dead, and with difficulty was I got round at all. My Melissa begins to wonder that I should be walking so late and said, 'If

you had come before you would at all events have helped us, for a wolf got into the farm and worried all the sheep. He let blood for them just like a butcher. All the same he didn't make game of us, even if he fled, for our slave thrust his neck through with a pike.' When I heard this I couldn't shut my eyes any more, but when it had got properly light I ran off to our Gaius's house as though I were a plundered innkeeper, and when I came to that place where the clothes had become stone I found nothing but blood, but when I reached home my soldier was lying in bed like an ox, and a surgeon was attending to his neck. I comprehended that he was a werwolf and I could never take a meal with him afterwards, not if it were to save my life." The crossing of the water in these cases is akin to the sprinkling with water when the transformation of some-one else was to be effected. (Cf. Ov., "Met.," iii, 189 and 190.)

(x) To find things which had been lost. "When Fabius had lost 500 denars he came to consult Nigidius, and boys inspired by him by a charm pointed out the place in which the purse had been buried along with part of those *coins, and told* that the rest had been distributed, and that even Marcus Cato the philosopher had one denar, which Cato confessed that he had received from his attendant" (Apul., "Apol.," 42).

They also believed magic could arrest runaway slaves and find escaped cattle. Pliny ("N. H.," xxviii, 2, 13) says: "We believe our Vestals to-day *to be able* by an invocation to pin fugitive slaves to the spot, *provided they have* not yet gone out of the city." There is another old charm: "For runaway [horses?] the owner shall

write on a paper with his left hand or the lady with hers the name of the runaway, otherwise thou shalt write behind the door: 'irrifa epona nupsit illegy'" (Richotta's "Anec. Lat.").

(xi) To raise or allay winds, tempests, or bad weather. "Does she herself now remove these winds from us with magic chant and smoothe the steep seas with dreadful tongue?" (Val. Flacc., viii, 351; also H. G., "Med.," 224). "When she pleases she drives the clouds from the gloomy sky, when she pleases she calls down snows in the heat of summer" (Tib., i, 2, 49-50; Ov., "Am.," i, 8, 9-10).

(xii) To draw away the fruits of another's land (Tib., i, 8, 19; also Verg., "Ecl.," viii, 99, and Servius *in loc.*, who says that it was provided by the XII Tables, "neve alienam segetem pellexeris"). Pliny ("N. H.," xviii, 6, 8) relates the following anecdote from Piso concerning this: "C. Furius Cressimus, a man freed from slavery, having obtained much larger crops on his quite small piece of land than his neighbours had from their very large ones, was regarded with great ill-will as though he had drawn away other people's crops by sorcery. Wherefore, fearing lest he should be condemned on the day appointed by Spurius Albinus the curule aedile, when the case would have to be decided by the vote of the tribes, he brought all his agricultural implements into the Forum, and also brought his strong, well fed, and well dressed household, excellently made iron tools, heavy mattocks, ponderous ploughshares, and well fed oxen. Afterwards he said, 'These, fellow citizens, are my sorceries, but I am neither able to show you nor to bring into the forum my night-work and watches and

the sweatings of my brow.' And so he was unanimously acquitted."

Another way of injuring their neighbour, but without benefiting themselves, was to afflict his crops and trees with blight or to bewitch his cattle (Verg., "Ecl.," iii, 103; Veg. Vet., vii, 73).

This was generally thought to be effected by the "evil eye" or tongue (cf. Pliny, "N. H.," vii, 2, 2); otherwise it was caused by the malign aspect of some planet (*sideratio*), cf. Pliny, xvii, 24.

Lactantius Placidus (on Stat., "Theb.," ii, 274) says that when the three envious brothers Telchines saw the fields of their neighbours smiling and fruitful they sprinkled them with Stygian waters to render them unproductive. Strabo (xiv, 7) confirms this, saying that they were charmers and enchanters who besprinkled plants and animals with water of the Styx mingled with sulphur in order to destroy them. Ovid, however ("Met.," vii, 365), says it was their eyes and aspect which worked the destruction.

VI. Magic and medicine were largely mixed up by the old Romans (Pliny, "N. H.," xxviii, 2). In fact, there was very little medicine without some magic.

Medea renews the youth of Aeson, Jason's father, by an enchanted brew (H. G., "Med.," 257 and fully; Ov., "Met.," vii, 159-296), and also makes an old ram young again by the same means. Then, by persuading the daughters of Pelias to imitate her, she gets them to kill their father in their attempt to do the same as she had done. It is to be noted that Old Age was one of the Children of Night, and they looked upon Fever and other diseases as being either demons

themselves or caused by demons (Pliny, "N. H.," ii, 7, 15). Compare "the sacred disease," *i.e.*, epilepsy.

Most of the medical magic was of a simple kind and consisted of applications of various sorts accompanied by the recitation of a charm and the performance of a prescribed ritual.

(*a*) The principle of some charms is that the disease or demon of it is advised to flee the patient as a more powerful demon is after him. One such charm is given by Pliny ("N. H.," xxvii, 11, 100), "a common stone near rivers bears a dry hoary moss, this is rubbed by another stone with human saliva added, the impetigo is touched by that stone, and he who touches it says: Φευγετε κανθαριδης λυκος αγριος αιμα (υμμ) διωκει (Flee, Cantharides, a wild wolf pursueth you)." "This remedy is an efficacious one for styes. You take nine grains of barley and prick the stye with their points in turn and say this charm at each puncture: Φευγε Φευγε κρειων (κρειττων?) σε διωκει (Flee, flee, a better one is after thee)" (Marc. Emp., viii, 193). This kind of charm was common as an inscription on amulets. "For a pain of the uvula thou shalt write on a paper and suspend it by a thread from the neck of the sufferer: An ant has no blood nor bile, flee, uvula, lest a crab eat thee" (Marc. Emp., xiv, 67).

(*b*) Other charms aimed at transferring the disease to some-one else, or to an animal who was to act as a scapegoat (Pliny, "N. H.," xxviii, 7, 86).

"You will ease toothache when, standing with your shoes on under the open sky upon the living earth, you seize the head of a frog and open its mouth and spit

into it, and ask him to take away the toothache with him, and then let him go alive. This you must do in a good day and in a good hour" (Marc. Emp., xii, 24). Other examples are to be found Marc. Emp., xxii, 41; xxix, 35.

(*c*) Other charms were on the principle that as one thing is done so may another be. There is an example of this, Marc. Emp., x, 34: "Thou shalt write this charm on virgin paper and tie it with linen thread and bind it about the middle of him or her who is suffering from a flux of blood from any part of the body: as the word gets shorter so should the flow of blood get less and less.

Sicucuma
[icucuma]
cucuma
ucuma
cuma
uma
ma
a

Another example of the same kind is found, Serenus Sammon, 935. He uses the word abracadabra.

(*d*) Other charms were on the principle that as what I mention cannot be done, neither may the disease be able to work its will on the patient. "A charm for colic either of men or of various animals *is performed* in this way. Thou shalt place thy hand against the belly of the sufferer and say these words thrice nine times, 'A stupid fell from heaven, shepherds found this disease, they gathered it without hands, they cooked it without fire, they ate it without teeth'" (Marc. Emp., xxviii, 16). "Three maidens were holding a marble table placed in the midst of the sea; two were twirling it one way, the other was twirling it back. Inasmuch as this has never been done so may that So-and-so never know the pain of colic" (Marc. Emp., xxi, 3). Again (viii, 91): "If a stye has been produced in the right eye, looking towards

the East beneath the open sky thou shalt hold the stye with three fingers of the left hand and say, As a mule bears no foal nor a stone wool, so may this disease not come to a head or if it has done so let it waste away."

(*e*) Other charms were simple wishes that the disease would depart. "*There is* a wonderful cure for swollen glands in this way: White little swollen gland, mayest thou neither grieve nor injure nor form abscesses, but melt away as salt in water" (Marc. Emp., xv, 101). Saserna's charm for gout: "O earth, keep thou the pain and health with me remain in my feet." He bids one sing this thrice nine times, touch the earth, spit downwards and sing it fasting (Varro, "R. R.," i, 2, 27). "An idiotic charm which is said to relieve gout *is performed* thus: Spit on your hands before you touch the earth in getting out of bed in the morning, and you draw your hands from above your ankles and feet to the ends of your toes and say, 'Flee, flee, gout and every pain of the nerves from my feet and all my members.' Or if you are charming another's *pain* you say, 'From the feet and members of that man whom she[1] bore.' 'Poison is conquered by poison, fasting saliva cannot be conquered.' You say this three times and spit at each of your feet or his feet who is to be cured" (Marc. Emp., xxxvi, 70).

(*f*) Other charms contain little stories in some cases abbreviated from or hinting at longer legends. Compare (*d*). Marc. Emp., xxviii, 74: "A charm for colic either of men or cattle *is performed* thus: rubbing the belly with the left thumb and the two little fingers you say, 'A tree was standing in the midst of the sea, from it a

[1] When the charm was said the name of the man's mother was substituted for this "she."

bucket full of human intestines was hanging, three maidens were going round it, two were binding, one was loosening.' You say this three times and three times in corresponding way having touched the ground you spit. If you are charming cattle you say, 'Of mules or horses or asses' intestines.'"

The following is from a tenth century manuscript for haemorrhage.

A foolish woman was sitting upon a fountain,
And was holding a foolish infant in her bosom.
Let the hills be dry, let the vales be dry,
Let the veins be dry, even those which are filled with blood.

If the foolish woman sits on the fountain she prevents the fluid escaping to the hills and vales. If "on a mountain" be read, the foolish woman is to be understood of a cloud which does not produce rain, but stops as a cloud at the top of the mountain, and thus makes the hills and vales dry.

(*g*) Other charms, being unintelligible, cannot be put under any of these classes. Such are Cato's charm for dislocations ("de Re Rustica," 160): "If there is a dislocation anywhere, let it be made whole by this charm. Take a green reed four or five feet long and split it down the middle and let two men hold it to the hips. Begin to say the charm, 'Motas vaeta daries dardares astataries dissunapiter,' until they go together. [In another *copy* it is thus put, 'Moetas vaeta daries dardaries asiadarides una piter,' until they go together.] Hereupon you must throw away the knife. When they have come together and the one touches the other, lay hold of it with the hand and cut it into a right and left hand portion. Bind it to the dislocation or fracture and it

will be made whole. The dislocation being nevertheless charmed daily. Or in this manner: 'huat haut haut istasis tarsis ardannabou dannaustra.' [In another *copy* it is thus put, 'The dislocation . . . or in this manner "huat hauat huat ista pista sista dannabo dannaustra."'] "

Marc. Emp., x, 55. "A charm for bleeding, from whatever part of the body it may come. Thou shalt touch the place from which it flows with the medicinal finger and say twenty-seven times and repeat as many times more as may be required, 'Socnon, socnon,' until thou stoppest the flow; it is wonderfully efficacious."

It is quite likely it would be. Suppose you have bleeding from a ruptured varicose vein in the leg and keep up pressure on the spot with the finger the bleeding will certainly be ultimately arrested without any charm.

Marc. Emp., xxi, 8. "For palpitation or pain at the heart this is a wonderful remedy that you are to write on a plate of tin, *καρυανκω καρυανκων καρυανκων* and smoke the amulet in storax and suspend it from the neck by a thread; you will be astounded how it will benefit."

The cold metallic lamina against the bare skin would probably set up reflex action and help to get rid of the flatulence which was causing the trouble, irrespective of the charm on it.

Marc. Emp., xxviii, 72. "A very useful charm for spasm of the belly. You are to press the thumb of your left hand upon the belly and say, 'Adam bedam alam betur alam botum.' When you have said this nine times you are to touch the earth with the same thumb and spit, and you say it again nine times and again a third